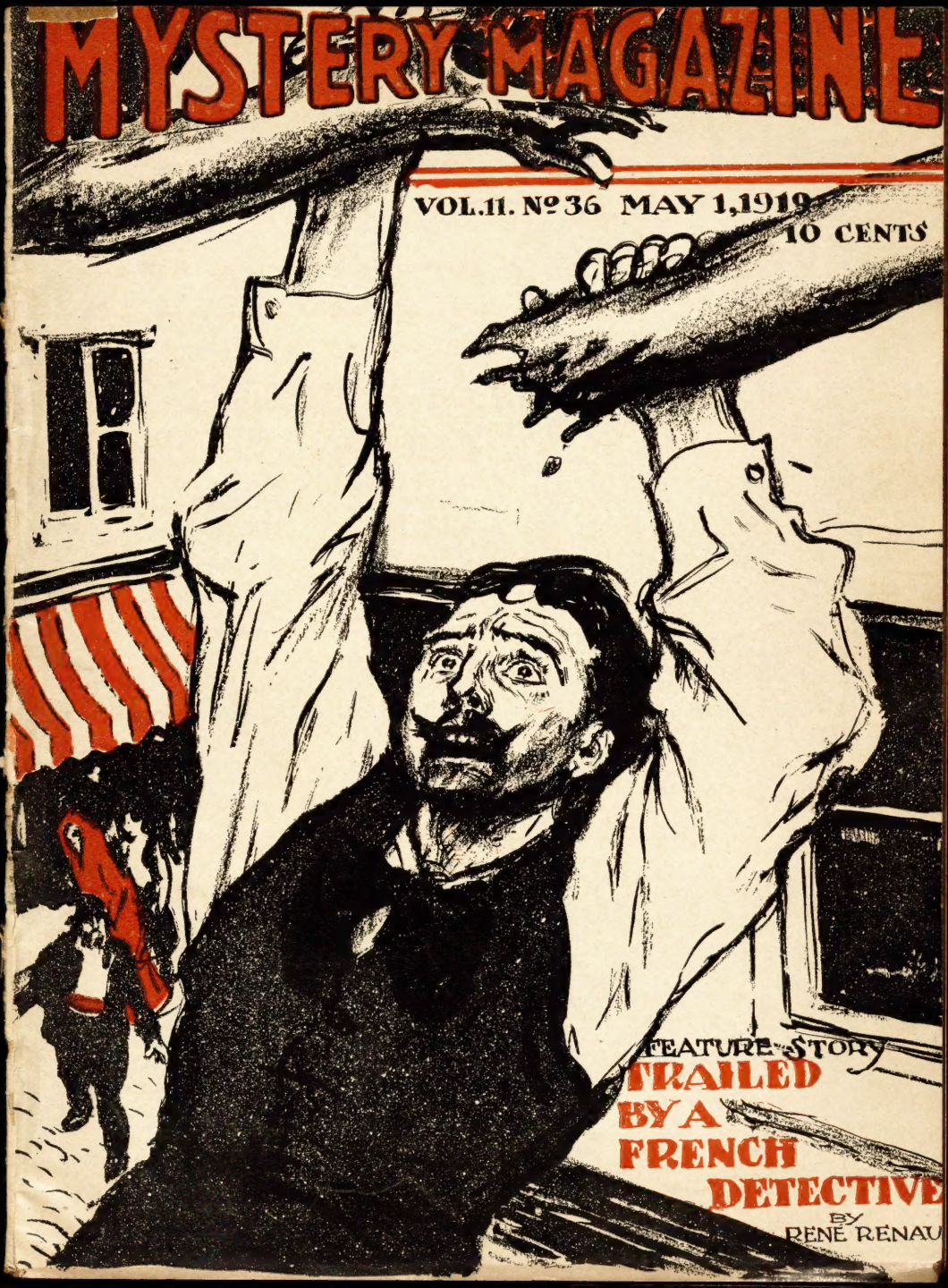
MYSTERY MAGAZINE

VOL. 11. No 36 MAY 1, 1919

10 CENTS



FEATURE STORY

TRAILED BY A FRENCH DETECTIVE

BY RENÉ RENAU

Read Robert W. Warden's Great Detective Story, "A DROP OF INK," Out May 15th

MYSTERY MAGAZINE

Vol. II. MAY 1, 1919. No. 36

Copyright, 1919, by Frank Tousey, Publisher, New York. All rights reserved. Entered as Second-Class Matter November 5, 1917, at the Post-Office at New York, New York, under the Act of March 3, 1879

Published Twice a Month by

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher

168 West 23d Street, New York

N. Hastings Wolff, Pres.
E. Byrne, Treas.
Charles E. Nylander, Sec.

LU. SENARENS, Editor

NOTICE—No letters will be answered or manuscripts returned unless accompanied by sufficient postage. The publishers disclaim responsibility for the loss of unsolicited manuscripts. Authors must name price wanted for submitted material.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE:

Domestic, Single Copy	10 Cents
Domestic, Yearly	$2.50
Canada	$2.75
Foreign	$3.00

All remittances should be sent by express money order, P. O. order, check, registered letter, or draft to insure safety. We will not be responsible for money sent otherwise.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FEATURE STORY — PAGE

TRAILED BY A FRENCH DETECTIVE, by Rene Renaud 1

SERIAL STORY

SOME SCRAPS OF PAPER, by Police Captain Howard 39

SHORT STORIES

AN EMBEZZLER'S REVENGE, by Martha Hatfield Price 25
THE MYSTERIOUS FORGERY, by a Bank Detective. 30
THE VEILED LADY, by Victor Reed. 33
STORIES OF GREAT DETECTIVES, by a New York Journalist 37

MISCELLANEOUS MATTER

Remembered a Voice After Forty Years 29
Explorer Finds Pigmy Tribe 29
Waiter Has $30,000 36
California's Fossil Mine 38

CURRENT NEWS

See a Snowbow—Historic Printing Press—Honesty in Prisoners—Cork Stone-House Sings—Voices in the Fog—Water Without Springs, Rivers or Rain—Remains of Ancient American Discovered—Remarkable Cases of Longevity—Employment Certificates Valuable Safeguards 42

TRAILED BY A FRENCH DETECTIVE

AN EXCITING SERIES OF ADVENTURES

By RENE RENAUD
(Translated from the French)

CHAPTER ONE

HOW I BECAME A DETECTIVE

"THERE is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune."

So wrote the great English bard, Shakespeare, and the passage has ever been a favorite quotation with me. And, sitting here by the glowing grate this chilly November evening, my thoughts idly wandering o'er the various scenes of my long, eventful life, a faint smile comes to my lips at the sudden remembrance of the tide which swept into the affairs of my early life, and bore me on to fame and fortune when I set out for Paris.

The next morning I was in the city, and half an hour after my arrival I stood in the presence of the chief of the secret police.

M. Leon Chassac—such was the name of my esteemed uncle—looked up with a frown from the "Docket of Criminals" over which he was poring, as the dusty door of his dustier office revolved on its creaky hinges. The frown deepened as his eyes rested upon my travel-stained form standing abashed in the shadowy aperture. Evidently the old gentleman was not overdelighted to see me.

"Well, it's you, is it?" he growled ungraciously enough.

"Yes, monsieur," and with these words I walked forward. "I hope you're glad to see me, uncle?"

"I can't say that I am," grunted the chief frankly. "I suppose you're out of work again? Idleness has become a chronic malady with you, Pierre."

"I hope not, uncle," I began hastily. "At least I——"

"Happily we don't see our own faults, Pierre," he interrupted. "But let me tell you that one of yours is laziness; so don't stand on the defensive."

"I have not endeavored to defend myself, nor could I conscientiously do so," I returned nervously.

M. Chassac adjusted his gold-bowed glasses and silently surveyed me for a moment or two. A short, corpulent old fellow was this uncle of mine; close-shaven, keen-eyed, alert, and dressed with scrupulous care in a suit of shiny black broadcloth.

"Well, what are you going to do with yourself?" he finally interrogated.

"I hardly know," I answered, looking ruefully down into the ruddy face of my kinsman. "I had entertained a faint hope——"

"And what did you hope?" he interrupted shortly.

"That there might be something in the service you could offer me," I murmured faintly.

M. Chassac let fall his docket of criminalities with something very much like a gasp.

"You!" he ejaculated, a look of undisguised amazement upon his features.

"Certainly; why not?" I returned desperately.

"Why not!" he echoed. "For the very sufficient reason that you are not qualified to fill any position beyond the counter of a country shoe shop. It takes a deal more than a good-natured dolt to fulfill the duties of a detective, *mon* Pierre."

"For all that, you might put me to the test," I pleaded.

A thought seemed to strike my worthy relative.

"And so I might," he concluded after a moment's pause. "I suppose it's against the code of human nature to let one's own flesh and blood starve outright, and I have a half notion to try you, anyhow. There, there!" he concluded cautiously, seeing that I was about to pour forth a torrent of thanks, "don't rush into a vortex of avowals before you are certain of my intentions. Now, listen to me attentively. One Roy Leflamme, a confidential clerk for Dumont & Bourdon, was suspected a week or so ago of appropriating the funds of his employers; and, while the firm were busy in summing up the total of their losses, he decamped, carrying with him money and bonds of very great value. A reward of five hundred francs—just think of it, a beggarly five hundred francs!—was offered for the apprehension of the culprit.

"A futile search followed, no trace as to his whereabouts being discovered. At least, by those most interested in the affair. But, very confidentially and strictly between ourselves, we have tracked the fellow to an outlandish neighborhood called St. Irene, where we intend to keep him until the reward offered for his apprehension is increased enough to recompense us for our trouble. Now, Pierre, here's your chance. Go and keep a close eye upon him; then, when the time arrives to expose him, I'll come and arrest him and pay you well for your trouble—all with the proviso that you do your work in the right way."

"But how am I to recognize the culprit?" I queried.

"Easily enough. He is your height to a hair's breadth, very dark, and effeminate to the last degree. One thing more, *mon garçon;* you must register under an assumed name. The name of Chassac is pretty well known, I fancy, throughout the empire, and we must on no account arouse the criminal's suspicions. Let me see, you have a middle name; what is it?"

"Edouard," I answered.

"That will do. Should I wish to communicate with you I will address Pierre Edouard. Do not forget this."

"You are certain the young man is at St. Irene?" I interrogated.

"Certain as I am of my own existence," he replied. "There is but one tavern in the place, and at it he is domiciled. It is highly probable that he will be under an assumed name. But you must ferret out his identity, aided by the information I have given you, and the fact that he has been in the place just a week this coming Tuesday. Here is money enough to cover your expenses. If you fail, never come my way again. If you succeed your future is assured. Now go!"

Carefully stowing away the generous supply of cash tendered I at once obeyed the old gentleman's somewhat peremptory bidding, and, with a thousand golden visions dancing before my eyes, made hasty preparations for the prosecution of my "first case."

St. Irene was indeed a very quiet and out-of-the-way place. There were precisely seven rambling farmhouses, an equally rambling church and a heap of brick and mortar which had for a sign, "Hotel d'Etranger."

I got to this place on the second morning after my departure. Once there, I set about my duties with all the system and regularity befitting them. Going direct to the tavern, I secured quarters, ordered dinner and went to my room until it should be prepared. When, after no very long time, I descended to dinner, the first person introduced to me was a certain M. Oliver Bertrand.

This man was in the last stage of respectable intoxication, and, as he lolled about the room, eating, gesticulating and talking, all in a breath, I had a good opportunity to study his physiognomy. My intuition at once told me the fellow was the one I sought—Roy Leflamme. His face was covered by a straggling beard of several weeks' growth; he was quite dark, and my height to "a hair's breadth."

That afternoon I sent the following telegram to the nearest railway office, to be forwarded immediately to the chief:

"Uncle Leon, everything is in excellent order, and awaiting your pleasure. PIERRE."

It was twilight when I again entered my room, and scarcely had I done so than I heard some one fumbling with the door-knob. A second later the door swung quickly open, and, leaning against the panel, was a woman. Quite a tall woman she was, certainly several inches above the accepted height of her sex. Her face, outlined by the dense shadows of the hall, was strangely prepossessing. She had full, regular features, a damask rose sort of complexion and pale-gray eyes under dark, curling lashes.

I was the first to regain composure.

"Is there anything I can do for you, mademoiselle?" I inquired, my heart fluttering a trifle as I stepped forward, for in my young and foolish days I was peculiarly susceptible to the charms of a pretty woman. At the first sound of my voice she shrank back till farther into the shadows. I saw at once that she had not seen me until I had spoken.

"Yes," she articulated faintly, in a velvety, contralto voice, "though I should never have intruded had I known you were here. The door of my room has become locked during my absence, and your key and mine are counterparts of each other, I learned from the hotel clerk."

I stooped forward and wrested my key from its lock, then passed into the hall, accompanied by the lady. Her room lay directly opposite my own and it was the work of scarcely a moment to insert the key and turn the lock into its rightful position. Then, with a faint murmur of thanks, the lady passed within, closing the door behind her.

I stayed there a second or so, listening to the fall of the receding footsteps, then turned about and was saun-

tering across the narrow hall when suddenly a man staggered with drunken force against me. Just then a momentary shimmer of light burned upward from the fitful glare of the hall lamp, and, lying half-senseless in my clasp, I saw the figure of Roy Leflamme.

I led the fellow a few paces, then set him on his feet and watched him, with a keen sense of satisfaction, stagger against the door of a room farther along the corridor and sink into a heavy sleep across the threshold.

The next morning, truth to tell, I felt more interest in my mysterious visitor of the night before than I did in either Leflamme or my breakfast. I watched for her until my eyes tired of their expectancy; and, despairing at last of seeing her, questioned mine host about her, and had my trouble for my pains. Mine host knew absolutely nothing beyond the meager facts that her name was Lenoir and that she kept to herself. So I had to content myself that day with watching the movements of Roy Leflamme and congratulating my vanity upon the conquest I had won over my old enemy—fate.

Toward evening I saw the door of Mademoiselle Lenoir's room slightly ajar, and ventured in with a neatly-worded pretense of having mistaken the apartment for my own. Mademoiselle Lenoir was manifestly surprised, and, I fancied, a trifle displeased. However, in the halcyon days of youth I was not easily abashed, and, seating myself, I opened conversation upon that blessed old topic—the weather. Mademoiselle Lenoir responded good-naturedly to my small talk and we spent a most agreeable half hour together.

Even to myself it seemed strange that I had never told her of the mission that brought me to St. Irene. Fear of the shock upon her nerves that would most probably attend the revelation that alone kept me from making it. No woman had the strength of character to maintain a strict composure, knowing herself to be beneath the same roof with a criminal, I argued.

And so things coursed along very pleasantly until one evening the following message was handed me:

"Pierre Edouard:—Will be with you to-night.
UNCLE LEON."

The messive set me to thinking, then to planning. First of all, I decided Mademoiselle Lenoir must not be compromised by so much as a sight of the affair. I would tell her everything and have her leave the house until all was over. I slipped out of my room and along the hall till I found the door of the culprit's room. Peering in, I saw the fellow lying prone upon his bed, sleeping off the effects of his spirituous potations. Quick as thought I snatched up the key lying at my feet, and quicker still locked my prey securely within. That done, I went to Mademoiselle Lenoir.

A stiff wind had crept up from the Channel, over which a storm was raging. Mademoiselle Lenoir was leaning before the window, resting her head against the jamb. She did not even look up as I entered the room in answer to her bidding. There was no time to lose, and, stepping to her side, I told her all; of Leflamme's crime, of his flight to St. Irene, and lastly, of his being now an inmate of the house. I meant to tell her, too, just what inmate he was, but she did not ask and I thought it needless. A transient cloud flitted over Mademoiselle Lenoir's face; then she paled to the roots of her dark hair.

"And you—you have been watching his movements all along?" she breathed huskily.

"All along," I responded with a slight bow, thinking at the same time what a hero I must be in her eyes.

She put her lips together rigidly as if to stifle an utterance that had arisen to them.

"And they are coming to-night to arrest him?" she inquired after a slight pause.

"Precisely."

The wind crept still higher, though the storm had abated somewhat in its fury. Mademoiselle Lenoir, reaching forward, pushed down the window, then crossed the room in a blind, dazed manner and paused before a table under whose cover an oblong parcel lay hidden. A second later she turned about, retracing her footsteps, her hands behind her back.

"You shall never live to see Roy Leflamme taken!" she suddenly exclaimed.

With these words she sprang forward, a world of hatred glaring in her steely eyes. With one hand she tore the dark strands of hair from her head, with the other she leveled a revolver full at my heart.

"You shall never live to arrest me, I swear!" she hissed again as I recoiled, dumbfounded, before her.

There was a long moment of silence; then a sharp, muffled report, mingled with the sound of hurried footsteps, fell upon my ear and a cloud of vaporous smoke eddied up toward the ceiling. Another space of silence, the smoke of the shot meanwhile clearing, and, looking forward, I saw the form of Mademoiselle Lenoir stretched at my feet, and, kneeling by her side, my uncle.

"Was it you who fired?" I asked faintly.

"Not at all," answered my uncle as he coolly stripped the dress from Mademoiselle Lenoir's lithe figure. "I merely turned Leflamme's weapon against himself—and he is in an eminently agreeable condition to be taken back to the city. As for you, Pierre—well, I never say much, *mon garçon*, but you're a hero, and we'll settle the rest between ourselves."

For an instant I stared at him in a state of idiotic astonishment. Then the whole truth of the matter flashed suddenly across my mind. There at my feet lay Roy Leflamme, and I, dolt that I was, had been watching the wrong man for over two weeks. But—happy fortune!—my astute uncle knew nothing of this. Even Leflamme himself, on my innocent avowal a few minutes previous, had evidently imagined that I had been cleverly shadowing him ever since my arrival at St. Irene.

Without an utterance I stole from the room and sped along the hall to where the supposed Leflamme lay sleeping, unconscious of his incarceration, and unlocked the door to his apartment. I learned afterward that the fellow was a confirmed drunkard, who had migrated to St. Irene simply to finish his existence in a trance of ecstatic collapse. As for the resemblance between him and Leflamme, it was purely an accidental one.

The next morning, in company with our prisoner, my uncle and myself started back for Paris. The greater part of the stolen funds was found upon Leflamme; and, being brought to trial, in due time he was convicted and sentenced to a long term of imprisonment.

Uncle Leon never tired of praising the "clever and courageous conduct" displayed by me on my "maiden case"; which undeserved flattery I, of course, received with becoming modesty—and, rest assured, no word of denial.

"Your future is assured, Pierre Edouard Lupin," he said grandiloquently as he generously handed me an equal share of the reward offered for the apprehension of the defaulter. "You have at last found your vocation."

That very week I received my "star" and was duly enrolled as "one of the force."

And that is how I became a detective.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STUDENT ASSASSIN

SOME time after I became a full-fledged officer the little town of Maurenton, in the south of France, was thrown one morning into a state of the wildest excitement. The Count de Marolles, the great man of the district, whose chateau stood just outside the town, had been murdered. He was found lying dead in his bed, while his valet, who slept in an ante-chamber, was unconscious from three wounds and not expected to recover.

That robbery was the motive of the crime there could be little doubt. The private desk of the murdered nobleman had been broken open and a large amount of money it was known to contain was stolen. More than this, it was evident the burglar was no novice, for a thorough search had been made through the whole house and every article of any value that could be removed carried away.

The means of the assassin's entrance and exit was found almost at once by an open window on the ground floor overlooking the garden, but any clue as to his identity seemed hopeless. He had evidently taken his precautions with the greatest care and only left one trace behind him. This, however, was more a proof of his personal habits than anything relating to his identity. After the murder had been done he had paused in the room on the lower floor to wash his hands.

The police, as well as several detectives from the capital, busied themselves for several days in trying to solve the mystery, with no avail, when the news arrived that another murder and robbery, so similar in every detail as to leave but little doubt it was the work of the same person, had been perpetrated at a town about sixty miles distant.

The victims this time were an old man, who had the reputation of being extremely wealthy, and his housekeeper. The two lived alone in a solitary house, and, upon no signs of them being seen in the town for two days, the house was broken into and both the old man and woman found dead in their respective beds. An examination of the bodies showed them to have been dead two days before they were discovered, thus making the time of their murder the night following that of the Count de Marolles.

As in the previous instance, the assassin had made a systematic search through the house, and again had paused to carefully wash his hands before making his escape. The murder of the Count de Marolles was completely thrown into the shade by this latter tragedy and the police officials and detectives buzzed around the place like so many flies, until, when just about obliged to confess themselves at fault, the news was flashed along the wires that the assassin had committed one more crime, and this time in Paris.

The victims were a widow lady and her only son, moving in the highest social circles. The lady occupied a small, detached house, surrounded by a garden, and her son, who had that day drawn a large sum of money out of the bank, resided with her. The son, evidently hearing the robber's footsteps in the hall, had started up with a revolver in his hand, but, before he could use the weapon, he had been killed, while his mother had also been struck down upon the very threshold of her bed-chamber. Again a thorough and systematic search had been made through the house, and again the assassin had paused to wash his hands.

The Parisian detective force, as a body, felt their professional reputation was involved if the assassin were once more permitted to escape, and more than a dozen of the acutest officers were set to work upon the case by my uncle. More for the sake of leaving no means untried than from a hope of gaining any important information, a detective was also sent to Maurenton, the scene of the murder of the Count de Marolles.

It often happens that from the very quarter where least is expected the most is gained. Especially is this true in the trailing of criminals. The detective was a man of ability, and in less than two days had found two strangers had been staying in the town for a few days previous to the murder. One of these had taken his departure the night before, and the other upon the morning of the discovery of the dark deed.

The one who had left last was a young man of about twenty-five, an art student, gay, debonair and careless of appearances, and certainly the last person in the world to be suspected of such a deliberately planned and coolly carried-out crime. The other was a man of between forty and fifty, very reserved and mysterious in manner and scrupulously neat and precise in habits and attire.

He passed his time at the hotel, mostly in writing and reading, and never allowed a speck of dust to soil his fingers without immediately washing them.

The detective at this discovery was in raptures. Following up the clue, he also learned that M. Gervol, the name by which this mysterious personage had registered, had not left by the train for Paris, as had been supposed, but, going to a small roadside inn about three miles from the town, stayed there until the following day.

Upon gaining this information the detective at once proceeded to the town, sixty miles distant, where the second of the three dark tragedies had been committed. Here he found M. Gervol had arrived at about eight o'clock on the night on which the old miser and his housekeeper had been murdered, taking the train early the next morning for Paris.

Once more in the capital, the experts of the Due de Jerusalem had but little difficulty in finding the whereabouts of M. Gervol. He occupied the second floor of a house in a respectable quarter of the city and was looked upon by his neighbors as being an amiable man, but a confirmed book-worm, with no world beyond his library. A further proof against him was found upon application to his bankers, who admitted he had within the last week paid into their hands a sum of over two hundred thousand francs.

This additional information seemed the last link in the chain of circumstantial evidence and within two hours after receiving it M. Gervol was arrested and placed in prison. He attempted no resistance. He seemed utterly overwhelmed by the charge against him and incapable even of asserting his innocence. To many persons this would have been capable of far different interpretations to that of guilt, but to the police authorities it was proof conclusive; and the detective who ferreted out the evidence was lauded to the skies.

But, in spite of the seemingly inexplicable web of circumstances which entangled the prisoner, I believed that he was innocent. I boldly expressed that belief to my astute uncle, the chief, and was unmercifully snubbed and derided at once. I was young then, and comparatively verdant in the great world of crime, and against the well-digested opinions of the brightest and keenest minds of the capital my own humble convictions were as naught.

But the ridicule of my relative served only to strengthen a determination I had already formed in my mind, and at the earliest opportunity I wended my way toward the cheerless cell of the accused. I found M. Gervol seated on the edge of his narrow cot, his face bowed forward

upon his hands in an attitude of utter weariness and dejection. He raised his head as I entered the chill dungeon; and, though his features were deathly white and his eyes held a burning, feverish light, the first shock of his ignominious arrest had worn off and he was able to reply to my few brief inquiries calmly and coherently.

He protested his innocence most earnestly. He had, he said, about a month before he left Paris for Maurenton, been made the executor to the bequest of a dying friend, who placed two hundred and thirty thousand francs in his hands, in trust for his nephew, a wild young artist, named Francois Vidal, which were to be given to him when the young man promised to reform his ways. If he did not, the bequest was to belong to Gervol. He had started to Maurenton, where he had heard the young man was staying. He had seen him, and, though not telling him of the legacy, used his utmost persuasion to induce him to reform.

Finding it useless, he had tried another method, and, pretending to leave town, had gone only a distance of two or three miles, intending to wait there and renew his efforts at a more favorable time. Finding, however, that the young man had left the town the next morning, he followed him to his next stopping place, a town about sixty miles distant, and thence to Paris, where, finding him still incorrigible, he had deposited the money in his own name at his banker's.

Such, in brief, was the story M. Gervol related, and, with my previous convictions as to his innocence, it is needless to say that I believed it to be true. With a few cheering words of hope I left him, sought my superior and asked for leave of absence. It was granted and a few hours later I started for Maurenton.

From there I tracked the footsteps of the art student as the more experienced officers had done those of the elder man, until I traced him back to Paris. The theory that I had formed in my mind had been strengthened by the evidence I gathered from point to point and I determined upon a brilliant professional coup.

My theory was that the assassin was none other than the art student, who, noticing the almost prudish cleanliness of the old man, had seized upon it as a means of fixing the suspicion of the successive murders upon him. If my supposition was correct, beneath the careless exterior of the art student was concealed a mind of almost fiendish mathematical precision. Notwithstanding the large amount of money he had gained as the reward of the three successive dark deeds he had perpetrated, he had not changed his mode of life, but still occupied a room on the top floor of a house in a street patronized by students and other dwellers in Bohemia, and it was toward this locality—my heart beating a trifle more rapidly as I neared the end of the trail—that I bent my steps. I found the student at home, looking with half-maudlin admiration at a sketch of a half-nude woman standing on an easel before him. A more than half-empty bottle, labeled "absinthe," was on a table at his elbow, and it was plain to be seen he had been imbibing freely. Hoping to take him by surprise, I advanced quickly to where he sat.

"Francois Vidal," I said, "you are my prisoner. Your game is at an end, so you had better come along quietly."

Half-intoxicated though he was, the man was not taken by surprise. Before the words had passed my lips he had drawn a revolver from his breast pocket and fired. The bullet missed its mark, for it only grazed my temple; but, for a moment or two, the force of the concussion caused me to stagger backward and clutch at the wall for support. Before I could recover myself the student had opened a door in the opposite wall and rapidly ascended a ladder leading to a skylight through the roof. Hardly had he reached the leads than I was after him. By the time I had reached the top of the ladder, however, he was more than twenty yards away, at the very edge of the roof. The street below was very narrow and the upper stories of the buildings projecting one beyond the other; not more than ten feet intervened between the roof on which we stood and that of the opposite house.

Evidently Vidal, becoming desperate, was meditating to take the leap.

"Stand!" I cried, at the same time leveling my revolver, "or I fire!"

The man's only answer was a wild, ringing laugh and the next moment he had leaped from the roof. For a breathing space he hung in the air, nearly sixty feet from the paved street below, and then his extended hands caught the leaden gutter beneath the eaves of the opposite house. He clung there for a moment or two with the tenacity of utter despair, and then the leaden spout began to bend beneath his weight. With one wild cry upon his lips, as the spout broke asunder, he fell to the street.

Unable to assist the wretched being, and fascinated by the horror of the spectacle, I had to this moment stood motionless; but now, rousing myself, I hastened down the stairs and out into the street. Strange to say, the fall had not been instantaneously fatal, and a faint shudder through the crushed and mangled body showed the man still breathed. Pushing my way through the rapidly increasing throng, I knelt down beside him and poured some brandy between his lips. After a moment he opened his eyes, and, gazing around wildly for an instant, with a last despairing effort raised his head.

"I am guilty!" he cried, "and the old man is innocent. I washed my hands to fix the suspicion——"

The death-rattle in his throat choked his utterance, and, throwing out his arms wildly, he fell back dead.

Of course, now that his innocence was proved by the real assassin's confession, M. Gervol was set at liberty, with many apologies for his unmerited imprisonment.

I received unlimited praises from my uncle for what he was pleased to term "the skill with which I tracked the perpetrator of these dark deeds," and also found myself suddenly elevated in the estimation of my brother detectives.

M. Gervol, too, showed that he appreciated my services by sending me, a few days after, a check for a goodly amount, which, in the then depleted condition of my pocket-book, was particularly acceptable.

CHAPTER THREE

THE MYSTERIOUS ROBBERIES

SITTING alone in my office one dull, dark October afternoon, indulging in the luxury of a quiet smoke, the door opened in a timid, hesitating manner and an old, wrinkled, gray-bearded man, poorly and shabbily dressed, shuffled in, and, throwing the glance of what was still a keen, restless, suspicious black eye over my person, said in a subdued and what sounded like a somewhat humble tone that he had called to see M. Pierre Chassac.

"That is my name, monsieur," I returned. "Pray step forward and take a seat."

"I hope we are alone, M. Chassac, for my business concerns only our two selves."

"We are entirely alone, monsieur," I replied.

"But sometimes, I am told," he continued, hesitating,

"these kind of places—I beg your pardon, M. Chassac, I mean no offense to you—sometimes, I say, I am told these places are contrived for secret listeners."

"But I have assured you, monsieur," I replied rather coldly, "that we are alone here, and if you doubt my word perhaps you had better carry your secret, whatever it is, away with you."

"Well, well," he replied somewhat hastily, "never mind—I will take your word—I will trust you. And I have good authority for doing so, too," he added, partly soliloquizing and partly addressing me. "You see, M. Chassac, as there is to be confidence between us, it is no more than fair to tell you that I have been to a magistrate, asking for a trusty and secret police agent, of superior cunning and intelligence, and that M. Pierre Edouard Chassac was named as the individual on whom I could rely in every particular."

"I am much obliged to the magistrate, whoever he is, for his good opinion and recommendation," I answered with a slight bow. "And now, monsieur, if you are satisfied I am prepared to hear your communication."

Again the old man hesitated and eyed me keenly, and turned somewhat pale at the thought of what he was about to divulge; but at last, as if pressed by necessity, he seemed to put his scruples aside and said:

"M. Chassac, I am an old man, as you see, and perhaps a rather eccentric one, as you may discover. Old as I am, I am alone in the world, having neither wife nor child, and only some distant relations, who do not care for me nor I for them. Poor as I look, and as everybody believes me" (here he glanced his keen eye suspiciously around him, leaned forward and whispered in my ear), "I have gold—much gold—enough to—to—well, no matter!"

I looked at the old man as he paused, and I said, while debating in my own mind whether he was sane or a monomaniac: "Well, monsieur, what has this gold to do with me?"

"Let me confess to you," he pursued, "since I have resolved to trust you, what I have never told to mortal ear, that I love gold—adore gold—and that I am what the world, if it knew, would call a miser."

"Then you are to be pitied," said I.

He fastened upon me a strange, startled, searching look as if he doubted the sincerity of my words, the statement of which seemed to be beyond his comprehension; as if it were impossible for him to understand how a miser—a man having actually heaps of gold—could be in any degree a subject of pity.

"Yes," he resumed at length, "I never saw a human being that I liked as well as myself; but gold, silver—the coin of the realm, of all realms—I like better."

"Well," returned I, now nearly convinced that the old man was not in his right mind, "I do not see what this has to do with me."

"Yes, yes, I am coming to that, M. Chassac—I am coming to that. You see, being alone in the world and loving nothing but gold, I naturally live alone with my gold. Years ago—a great many years ago, you see—I bought an old tumble-down house on the outskirts. Heavens! what a price I had to pay for it, too!—two thousand francs, M. Chassac, actually two thousand francs, monsieur, for that house and bit of land, and all in hard gold, too! Well, as I was saying, I bought the house, and then went to work myself, with my own hands, that I might not pay out any more money and have anybody know my secret, I constructed a safe—a fire-proof safe—and then had an iron door made for it with a bank lock that no one could open without the key and secret of him who had locked it. This done, I sold all the property which I had inherited, converted it into gold, put the gold in leather bags (another expensive luxury), and secretly deposited them into my safe. Since then I have dressed like a beggar and lived alone with my gold, the sight of which has given me hours of rapture and the jingle of which has filled my ears with a delight which I cannot express. Well, monsieur—well, monsieur," continued the old man, fairly trembling at the thought, "I now come to the painful business which has brought me here. Ah, my God! I wonder it has not driven me mad! For years, M. Chassac—for years—for years, monsieur—I lived alone with my gold and kept my own secret and nobody found me out; but, of late, monsieur (my God, be merciful!), I have been robbed—robbed, monsieur—of my gold, M. Chassac."

"Then I suppose you are a poor man?" said I. "How was your house broken into? Give me the most minute particulars, for it is often by the merest trifle that we detectives are able to get the clue that leads to the greatest results."

"Ah! there it is, monsieur—there is the mystery!" groaned the old man. "You are mistaken, M. Chassac, in supposing that I am literally a poor man or that my house has been broken into at all, so far as I can discover. No, monsieur—no! The money has been taken—several times—a bag at a time—and yet nothing has been disturbed. My doors and windows, which I have always bolted as well as locked, I have never found unbolted or unlocked, which must have been the case if any one had come in that way. And then my safe is always found just as I left it, and the key fastened to my body by its iron chain. The first bag of gold I missed (oh, heaven be merciful!) was about two months ago, and I could not believe it was gone till I had counted the remaining bags over and over, perhaps fifty times. Then I tried to believe I had taken it out myself and mislaid it, and I spent two days searching the whole house—every nook and cranny—every likely and unlikely place. Well, monsieur, a week went along and another bag was missing. Horrible mystery! Since that I have lost three more—the last one last night—and human nature can endure it no longer. Oh, monsieur, find out the thief and restore to me my missing gold and I will—will—worship you, monsieur!"

I smiled at the idea of obtaining a miser's worship in return for my trouble of detecting a mysterious thief and restoring the owner a large amount of gold; and I said facetiously:

"Unquestionably what you offer is very valuable, in your estimation; but neither a miser's blessing nor curse will pass current for rent, food or clothing. No, monsieur—a——"

"Latour—Ambroise Latour."

"No, Monsieur Latour, if I undertake this business of detecting the thief and getting back your money, or any portion of it, I must be paid in gold—gold, monsieur, gold—for I, too, like gold—though for what it will buy, and not to worship."

For a long time we could not agree upon terms; but at last, having got the matter settled to my satisfaction, I entered with great zest into the penetration and unravelment of what was really a wonderful mystery. That night, after dark, I made my appearance at the miser's house; and, being admitted and the door secured, I began my inspection of the premises.

I went up to the roof and down to the cellar, searching minutely all the walls, floors and ceilings for some place where a thief might enter and secrete himself. The house was an old, crazy structure, sure enough, but I found

nothing to give me a clue to the mystery. The doors and windows were all bolted on the inside, and the bolts, I assured myself by close examination, were all sound and in good order. In the cellar was a well, from which the old man drew what water he used, and I satisfied myself there was nothing suspicious about that. Then I went around the walls and tried every stone of any size to see if it might be removed; but all were fast and solid. At last I came to the money safe, which was curiously built in the ground, with iron door upward, like a trap-door, and which was effectually concealed by scattering dirt over it.

"I must see the inside of this," said I. "There may be an excavation underneath."

"Oh, monsieur," returned the old miser, trembling at the thought of exposing his riches, "you will not take advantage of an old man? You will not betray me? You will promise this—you will swear it?"

I might have got offended at this question of my honesty from another, but I took into consideration the peculiarities of the miser and promised all he wished, even going so far as to take an oath of secrecy. At last, after much hesitation and demurring, he ventured to expose the interior of the safe to my gaze. It contained twenty-five heavy bags of gold, with a large amount of silver thrown in loosely; but the bottom, sides and all parts of it, save the iron door, were composed of thick granite, perfectly cemented, and had never been disturbed since being put together.

My inspection of the house was now completed, but without gaining the slightest clue to the mystery of the robberies. I could discover no place where any one could have entered, and there was certainly no one now concealed in the house. I questioned the miser as to who had visited him, but he positively declared that, without exception, I was the only one he had permitted to cross his threshold since taking up his solitary abode there. I was at a stand. I knew not what to suggest. Had but one been missing, or had he only been robbed once, the matter would have seemed susceptible of some rational solution, but to be robbed several times, at irregular intervals, and the thief to be so forbearing as to take only a comparatively small portion at each time, and then, withal, leave no trace, save the loss, of his having been there, this it was that puzzled and perplexed me exceedingly. I finally went away at a late hour, promising to give the matter my serious consideration, and the old man agreeing to communicate with me immediately on the occurrence of anything new.

Three days after, he again appeared in a half-distracted state, and declared that, during the night previous, he had been robbed of another bag of gold. Again I repaired to his house, and made another search, going from cellar to roof and from roof to cellar, examining everything, even to his old rotten straw bed, but only to end as wise as I began. I made him open his safe, and saw with my own eyes that only twenty-four bags remained; and I knew from his appearance that the missing money was really lost, since it was not possible for any one to counterfeit such wretched grief and terror on his countenance as his language and manner expressed. The money was gone; but who was the thief, and by what mystery had he made his entrance and exit, and opened and closed the safe?

In a few days the miser was robbed again; and, in spite of all I could do, he continued to be robbed, at longer or shorter periods, for several months, until in fact only ten bags of gold remained, and by this time he was wasted almost to a skeleton through grief at his loss, and I had become so nervous and superstitious that I looked to see a ghost every time I visited the dwelling. What could it mean? I had spent days and nights in the house; had arranged matters so I could come and go as I pleased, at all hours, secretly and openly; and yet, though I had used this freedom and been an almost constant spy upon the premises, I had failed to detect the slightest clue to the thief. Surely, it could not be the work of human hands; and the thought of the supernatural, I confess, made my blood run cold.

One night I retired to bed, terribly perplexed with this mystery; and after rolling and tossing about for a long time I fell asleep, and dreamed I was in the miser's house on the watch, and that I saw him get up, go to the safe, unlock it, take out a bag of gold, drop it in the well, re-lock his safe, and return to his bed.

"That is it!" I cried, leaping out upon the floor. "I have it now! The wretched man is a sleep-walker, and has all along been robbing himself. Why have I not thought of this before?"

I dressed in haste, and set off, night though it was, to ascertain the truth of my new conjecture. I reached the gloomy house, went in, and found the miser was not in bed. I hurried downstairs, and by the light of my lantern beheld him stretched out on the ground, near the well, with a bag of gold in his hand. I spoke to him, but he did not answer. I stooped down, took hold of his wrist, felt his pulse, and started up in horror.

He was dead! He had died in the act of robbing himself! The mystery was solved; my dream had revealed the truth, and the missing bags of gold were all found at the bottom of the well. The whole was taken possession of by the authorities, and I received my just dues for services rendered.

CHAPTER FOUR

MURDER WILL OUT

IN June, a month after the foregoing event, a terrible and mysterious murder was committed at the quiet little village of Poitiers. The local police used their utmost efforts to discover the perpetrator of the crime, but as their exertions were attended with no result whatever, I was sent down by *mon cher oncle* (who by this time had begun to have great confidence in the skill of his once graceless nephew) to take the matter in hand.

The following is a *résumé* of the main facts in connection with the tragedy:

On the afternoon of the first of June, at about four o'clock, a gentleman walked up to "Hotel de Lille," the principal hotel at Poitiers, and secured a bed there for the night. He was a tall, handsome-looking man, apparently about five-and-thirty years of age.

He carried a fishing-rod and a small black bag, and from the fact of his making inquiries respecting the rivers of the neighborhood, it was conjectured that he was on a fishing excursion.

He dined at seven, and, after leaving instructions with the *garçon* to call him at six the following morning, he retired to his room shortly after ten.

The night passed as usual, nothing whatever occurring to alarm the occupants of the hotel, and at the appointed hour next day the *garçon* proceeded to the visitor's bedroom for the purpose of awakening him as arranged.

He knocked several times, and called out the hour, but failing to elicit any reply, he tried the handle with a view

to entering the room, but the door was locked. He again knocked violently and shouted loudly through the key-hole; but still to no purpose.

Actuated now by a vague feeling of alarm, he summoned his master, and the latter, finding it utterly impossible to rouse the stranger, burst open the door and entered the room.

Here a terrible sight presented itself.

In the bed, the clothes half turned down, was lying the stranger, stark and dead!

He had been stabbed through the heart by a white-handled clasp-knife, which still remained in the wound.

From the position of the body, and the expression of the countenance of the deceased, it was plain that he had been slain while asleep, and had died without a struggle.

His black bag, which he had taken to his room with him, was missing; there was not a single coin in his pockets; and a gold watch and chain and several rings —which a waiter was positive he had noticed the preceding evening—were also nowhere to be found. Hence it was inferred, and very naturally, that plunder had been the object of the crime.

The window was wide open, and through this, as the door was locked on the inside, the assassin must have entered the room. Repairs were going on in another part of the premises, and a ladder which had been left standing against one of the walls by the workmen had been shifted and placed close to the murdered man's window. Here it was found in the morning, and by it the murderer had undoubtedly ascended and made his escape.

The deceased's clothes were carefully searched, but nothing calculated to throw any light on the crime could be found. It was impossible, too, to ascertain his name or position, for his linen was unmarked, and no letter or scrap of paper of any kind was to be discovered.

Pending the coroner's inquest a large reward was offered for the apprehension of the murderer, and the police left no stone unturned in their endeavors to unravel the mystery. But, as I have already remarked, failure, absolute failure, attended their exertions.

The little they were able to discover amounted to this: A porter at the station identified the stranger as having reached Poitiers on the first of June by the 3:30 train from Niort—a small town about twenty-two miles distant. He was certain of this fact, and also of the date, for this reason: his wife had come from Niort on that day, and by this train; she and the gentleman in question were the only passengers; and when he took the tickets he noticed that the latter's was marked Niort, and was struck by the slight coincidence of both the solitary arrivals having come from the same place.

Inquiries were at once instituted at Niort, and soon the proprietor of a hotel in that town came forward and recognized the deceased as having stayed three days in his house, from the 30th of May until the 1st of June. He had announced it as his intention of remaining for a much longer period, but after luncheon, on the last-mentioned day, he called quite unexpectedly for his bill, and took his departure shortly after two. But as to who the gentleman was, or where he came from, the landlord could not afford the slightest clue.

A waiter, however, was able to throw a little extra light on this sudden departure. He said that the stranger had intimated his intention of going fishing in the afternoon, and, after ordering lunch for half-past one, had set out for a stroll through the town. Shortly before this time he hurriedly entered the hotel, looking, the waiter observed, as if he had just seen a ghost. Something had evidently occurred to upset him, for he trembled visibly, and his face was pale as ashes. Walking into the coffee-room, he called for half a pint of brandy, and drank off nearly the whole of the raw spirit at a gulp. As he did so, his hand shook so violently that he could scarcely raise the tumbler to his lips. He tried to eat his luncheon, but could scarcely swallow a morsel; and then, after paying his bill, he took his bag and rod, slunk out of the house by a side entrance, and hurried away down one of the back streets.

Such was all the information that the police, despite their utmost endeavors, were able to collect.

The day after my arrival the inquest was held, and a verdict of "Willful murder against some person or persons unknown" returned; and no one appearing to identify the unfortunate victim, he was quietly buried in the parish church-yard. But, previous to this being done, I took the precaution of having his face photographed.

After hearing an account of the measures taken by the local police, I proceeded to make a minute inspection of the clothes of the deceased.

Coat, waistcoat and under-clothes underwent a most searching examination, but to no purpose. I now took up the trousers, and after exploring and turning out the pockets, I pursued the same course with regard to the trousers themselves. As I did so, something white dropped to the floor.

To pick it up and inspect it was the work of an instant.

It was a piece of white calico tied around with a string —was, in fact, neither more nor less than a bandage. It was stained with blood, and had unquestionably dropped from a wounded finger. I unfolded it, and found that it had originally formed part of a shirt. This fact was patent, for there, in marking ink, was the name of the person to whom it belonged, viz., "X. X. Nolle." Now, none of the deceased's fingers were injured in any way, so I lost no time in inquiring who had access to the clothes since the tragedy; and finding that no one had touched them but the landlord of the "Hotel de Lille," his waiter and two of the police, I questioned each of them in reference to the matter. Having been assured that the bandage had never belonged to either of them, I no longer doubted that it had fallen from the finger of the murderer, and that I had in it made a most valuable discovery.

But my hopes were soon dashed to the ground.

Notwithstanding that I had prosecuted my search in every possible direction, nowhere could I light upon the mysterious name "X. X. Nolle," nor meet with any one who had ever heard of a name rejoicing in these strange initials and surname.

Day after day glided by, and finding at last that I was no further advanced towards unraveling the mystery than at first, I gave up the matter in despair, and started back to Paris.

Now it was that accident, the merest chance whatever, came in the most signal manner to my rescue.

I had proceeded some forty miles on my return journey, and the train having stopped some minutes at a large station, was just beginning to move again.

I was listlessly gazing out of the carriage window, when my eye was suddenly attracted by something which caused me to hurriedly clutch my carpet-bag and leap like a madman from the train.

Thrusting on one side a porter, who began remonstrating with me on the danger I had just incurred, I hastened to examine that which had caused me to act as I had done.

I found I was not mistaken.

There, straight before my delighted eyes, was an ad-

vertising board respecting the "Hotel European," at "Abbeville." This, I read, was replete with every convenience, etc., etc., and the proprietor was X. X. Nolle.

I was very active, rest assured, in ascertaining where Abbeville was located, but it was only through perseverance that I got the desired information. Every person I met was ignorant of its locality, till at last, in despair, I studied a railroad map of the Empire, and there, in an obscure corner of an obscure province, the little village of Abbeville was made out.

The train to connect with the road leading thither soon came puffing into the depot, and eight o'clock that evening found me in front of the "Hotel European."

The landlord was standing on the steps when I entered, and one glance at his fat, jovial visage was enough to convince me that he was no murderer.

I betook myself to the coffee-room, and in the course of a short conversation with a waiter, I elicited from him that X. X. Nolle, a jolly, thirsty soul, was by no means the commanding officer in the establishment, but that there was a Madame X. X. Nolle who discharged the duties of the arduous post.

I deemed it advisable, then, to ignore X. X., and to send and ask his good lady for a private interview. This was at once granted, and then, mentioning my name and business, I showed her the piece of calico, and inquired if she knew anything about it. Fortunately, for the interests of justice, she did know a great deal about it. And she imparted the following information:

One evening towards the end of May, a merry party of travelers were assembled at the "European." Champagne flowed freely, and the proceedings were of a most uproarious character. Just before twelve, M. Jules Garrant, of the great firm of Duchaney & Co., Bordeaux, had the misfortune to severely cut one of his fingers with a broken glass. He at once made his way to Madame Nolle, and asked her help in the matter. Not being able in the hurry of the moment to find material for a suitable bandage, and as the blood was flowing copiously, she hurriedly tore a piece from an old worn-out shirt of her husband's, and with this bound up the wound.

Finding that the shirt in question was not yet cut up, I asked to inspect it, and, on applying the portion I had brought with me, it was at once seen to be the identical piece that had been torn away.

Armed with this most vital piece of evidence, I lost as little time as possible in quitting the ville; but previous to doing so, I gleaned all the particulars I could respecting M. Jules Garrant, and I ascertained that he was a young man of about eight-and-twenty, and in receipt of a goodly salary from his employers.

This last piece of intelligence materially strengthened a hazy suspicion which had existed in my mind from the outset, viz.: that some other motive than mere robbery had actuated the murderer. The evidence of the Niort waiter had made a great impression on me, and I could but believe that the murdered man's evident fright and sullen departure from that town had been caused by an encounter with some enemy.

Now, the evidence of Madame Nolle would undoubtedly go far towards bringing the crime home to Garrant, but still my experience had taught me that it would be well to try and secure some further proofs of his guilt before taking him into custody.

I accordingly made my way once more to Niort, feeling confident that I should hear something of my man in that place. My work here was certainly of a satisfactory character. I ascertained that Niort was a town in M. Garrant's round; that he was due, and had arrived there, on the 1st of June, but that instead of staying the night at the head commercial hotel there, as he usually did, he had left there in the course of the afternoon.

But here the trail ceased. Despite my utmost efforts I could not ascertain how, or when, he had set out from the town, or in what direction he had gone. Failing here, I inquired at the next town on his route; this, I learned, was a place about twenty miles distant, and some ten miles to the west of Poitiers. Arriving here, I soon found that Garrant, due on June 2, had arrived there that day, and had transacted business as usual. As I could find no trace of him at the station, I could but infer that after the committal of the murder he had made his way over from Niort on foot.

Here I was told, too, that by this time he would be back again at Bordeaux; and as I now thought it high time that I had a look at him, I immediately took the train for Bordeaux myself.

I first saw him at a billiard-room in the Rue Hermoine, where he generally passed his evenings when at home.

He was a powerfully-built, determined-looking man, but there was nothing unusual in his appearance, nor would any one have had the slightest cause for suspecting that he had recently committed a terrible crime.

He wore, I observed, a splendid diamond ring of a somewhat peculiar make.

I was somewhat puzzled as I walked towards my lodgings that night as to what course I should pursue, but when I reached the hotel I found that fortune had again lent me a helping hand.

A gentleman was waiting, who introduced himself as a friend of the stranger recently murdered at Poitiers. He had that very day visited that town by the merest accident, and put up at the "Hotel de Lille." Here he had been shown the likeness of the victim, and had at once recognized it as that of an intimate friend of his—M. Charles Sharron, of Montauban.

At Poitiers, too, he had been informed of my connection with the case, and, seeing my name upon the register on his arrival at Bordeaux that evening, had waited for me in hopes of being of some service in trailing the assassin.

He proceeded to state that M. Sharron was an orphan, and a man of considerable property. He had a house at Montauban, but spent a great part of his time in travel. His absence from home being long and frequent, it was not to be wondered at that his servants should have felt no alarm at not having seen him during the past few weeks.

M. Soucier, my visitor, who stated in the course of our conversation that he was an *avocat*, doing business at Montauban and Bordeaux, was, I could see, greatly attached to his lost friend, and was excessively anxious that the murderer should be brought to justice.

Next night I met him by appointment, and together we proceeded to the billiard-room in the Rue Hermoine.

Garrant came in shortly after our arrival, and was soon deep in a game of pool. We stayed about ten minutes, and then M. Soucier whispered to me to take our leave. The instant we got outside, he clutched my arm, and said:

"I have never seen this man before in my life; but he has got on poor Sharron's ring. This I'll venture my life upon."

Now my course was clear.

Early next morning I presented myself at the lodgings of M. Jules Garrant. I was shown to his sitting-room, which was on the ground floor. Here I found him seated at breakfast. He looked up haughtily as I entered—

I had walked in unannounced—and peremptorily demanded my business.

"I am come, M. Garrant," said I, sternly, "to arrest you on a charge of willful murder!"

Scarce had the words passed my lips, than he hurled the coffee-pot he held in his hand at my head. The missile fortunately struck me on the brim of the hat, but still it was thrown with such force that I was felled to the floor.

Ere I could gain my feet Garrant had dashed to the window, thrown it open, and leaped out.

Had he done so in safety, he would in all probability have effected his escape; but, as it was, his feet caught in the area-railing, and he fell with a sickening crash to the pavement.

Here he lay motionless and helpless.

I hastened to raise him, but found that his skull was fractured, and that he had but a short time to live.

He was carried back to his room, where he died in twenty minutes' time.

Previous to his death he confessed his crime and the reason of its committal.

Some years before the murdered man had robbed M. Garrant's only sister, and persuaded her to accompany him from her home in Bordeaux to Paris. Here he afterwards abandoned her, and his victim, driven to despair, sought a watery grave in the Seine. Her brother, learning her fate, vowed vengeance against her destroyer, but, despite his efforts to meet him, he never once crossed his path till he accidentally saw him at Niort. He dogged his steps, entered the same train unobserved, and when Sharron got out at Poitiers, he did the same, taking care again to do so unseen by him. The better to observe the direction in which his enemy went, he entered the waiting-room, and from there watched him walk towards the village. When he had gone sufficiently far to enable Garrant to follow him unnoticed, he left the station on his track.

By this time the porter who had taken the tickets had left his post; hence Garrant's arrival was never known to him.

He dogged M. Sharron's footsteps to the "Hotel de Lille," and when the deed was done, plundered his victim's clothes, in order that it might be supposed he had been slain by an ordinary robber. He also took his bag and all his papers, so that the murdered man's identity might never be ascertained.

I got great credit with the authorities for the skill I had displayed in the case; but, as the foregoing narrative has shown, it was almost entirely to "Dame Fortune" that my success was to be attributed.

CHAPTER FIVE

A BEAUTIFUL DEMON

IT was shortly afterwards that all Paris was terrified. In less than six months thirty young men had disappeared in the most mysterious manner, and no clue to their fate could be discovered. They were all young, all handsome, all rich. All had money or jewels about them when they vanished from their abodes forever.

In the Faubourg St. Antoine five families of the wealthy shop-keepers there mourned the loss of their sons. The eldest of these young men was five-and-twenty—the youngest nineteen. Their relatives made, as was natural, a great clamor, and fearful stories were in circulation amongst the populace.

Great trouble was caused by these absurd stories, and many inoffensive persons were brutally used. Moreover, people were afraid to go out of doors after nightfall, and were in terror if those who were dear to them were absent at unwonted periods.

Finally the prefect of the secret police summoned into his presence the lieutenant-general, reprimanded him for his neglect in so important a matter, and declared that he should hold him responsible if another man vanished in so mysterious a manner.

The lieutenant, greatly mortified, having replied submissively, returned home, and after mature deliberation with some of the most prominent of his police agents, sent for my uncle, who, calling upon me to accompany him, at once repaired to the official's quarters.

After briefly narrating the facts given above, the lieutenant placed the whole matter in my uncle's hands.

"I depend upon you to ferret out the mystery," he said, "to save me from the prefect's wrath, and make yourself a rich man."

He then named a reward, which made my worthy uncle's eyes sparkle with cupidity.

"I will do what I can," he answered, "even if I am called upon to repeat the sacrifice of Abraham." The words had a deeper significance than those who heard them imagined. "Give me eight days, and I will strive to place the culprits in your hands by that time."

Monseigneur was rejoiced to hear so hopeful an answer, and leaving him, we set about investigating the facts of each case of mysterious disappearance which had occurred within the year at Paris.

We discovered that, save for those whose bodies had afterwards been found in the Seine, and who were principally women driven by poverty of disgrace to suicide, the persons missing were all young men, and all possessed at the time costly valuables or money.

This every one knew; but we also made another discovery. Each young man had confessed to some friend or confidant that he was in love with a wonderfully beautiful lady, who had first fallen in love with himself; and two had exhibited notes which contained an appointment to meet his fair one near the Chapel of St. Eloi, which was in a very poor and dangerous quarter of Paris.

Having made sure of this—a weary day's work it had been—we returned to headquarters, sought a private apartment, held a long consultation, and laid our plans.

What those plans were you will presently discover.

I had now resided in the metropolis some years, but outside of those with whom I was brought in immediate contact, was but little known. I had hitherto dressed plainly, though always in good taste, and, save an occasional ticket to the theater or opera, indulged in none of the fashionable amusements or frivolities.

But now I suddenly began to appear in the streets and boulevards with a gold watch chain upon my vest, with my fingers sparkling with rings, and with my hands forever in my pockets jingling the money therein contained. I walked about the streets, on the quays, in the gardens of the Tuileries and Luxembourg, and in all the public galleries, bringing myself into great notice everywhere.

My uncle's neighbors, who did not know that he was chief of the Secret Detective Bureau, but believed him to be a quiet gentleman who had retired from business on a small fortune, often spoke to him in warning tones.

"Your nephew will bring misfortune on himself, M. Chassac," they would say. "It is no longer safe for splendid young men like that to be so well known."

But M. Chassac would reply that his nephew was quite able to take care of himself, or, at least, thought so, and that there was no managing young men by good advice, as in his day. But all the while a number of trusty police agents were following me in all sorts of disguises, and the strictest watch was kept upon my every action; while I, carrying out the scheme already planned, was simply playing the part of fop and idler.

For five days I made an exhibition of myself in all public places. On the sixth, as I was sauntering slowly through the gardens of the Tuileries, a young lady passed by me—a vision of loveliness so radiant, so dazzling, that for a moment my breath was fairly taken away. Close behind her came an old waiting-maid.

Having passed, the young lady seated herself upon a rustic settee, beneath the wide-spread branches of a noble oak, and calling her maid, whispered a few words rapidly in her ear.

They were evidently speaking of me, and suddenly remembering my mission and instructions, I assumed all the airs of flattered vanity on the instant. I arranged my necktie, played with my gold chain, consulted my watch, and finally sauntered slowly past the lady, casting admiring glances at her beautiful face, and jingling the gold pieces in my pockets.

The lady, on her part, favored me with a most bewitching smile, and a half-timid, admiring glance from her midnight eyes ere she arose and went on her way, followed by her servant.

I lingered about the place after she was gone, for I began to fancy that I was about to solve the riddle of those mysterious disappearances which had caused such consternation. Nor was I mistaken. In a few moments the old servant came hurrying back, and, pretended to search for something under the tree where the lady had seated herself. I noticed that she continually kept her eyes upon me, and sauntering forward, I inquired what she was looking for.

"A bracelet my young lady dropped—and here it is," said the old woman, pretending to pick something from the ground, and showing me a bracelet she had all the while held in her hand.

A plot of some sort was evidently in progress, and I felt excited and interested beyond all my former experiences.

"It is a bracelet the prince, my lady's father, gave her," continued the old woman. "Ah! you may well stare. My lady is the daughter of a rich Polish prince, who has already made her wealthy, and who will leave her an immense fortune when he dies. Happy indeed will be the husband of that beautiful young lady of mine. She has had a thousand offers, but has refused them all. I think she has lost her heart at last, however."

"Indeed!" I responded, with an air of attentive interest—"may I ask to whom?"

"My lady remarked, as we walked away, that she had never seen so handsome a young gentleman as monsieur," replied the old woman, with a hideous smile.

I immediately assumed an expression of delight, and drawing a piece of gold from my pocket, I placed it in the old woman's hand.

"Where shall I see her again?" I questioned, with apparently much eagerness. "I confess I have lost my heart also."

"Go to-night to the Church of St. Germain," replied the old woman, "and stand near the principal door. My lady will come there to prayers. You may, perhaps, get an opportunity of showing her your admiration. The prince would kill me if he knew, but monsieur is so handsome that I cannot resist him. And if you desire to make an impression, monsieur, dress yourself as finely as you can. Remember my mistress is a Polish princess; she is used to elegance and much jewelry."

"Accursed witch!" I muttered to myself, "thus you have beguiled many poor fools"; but aloud I answered, assuming at the same time an air of guileless simplicity: "Oh, indeed, I am afraid of neither prince nor princess. My father is a very wealthy gentleman at Mars, and I am here to attend lectures at the university. I have been here only a few days, and my father is generous. I have over three thousand francs in my purse, and am always well provided. I am a match for any prince, but I adore the young lady, and shall look my best, be assured."

So we parted, and hastening immediately to my uncle, I related my adventure, and declared that I was convinced that I had begun to fathom the mystery.

M. Leon Chassac was of the same mind, and, after a few further words of instruction, he bade me go and prepare for my night's work. "And remember, *mon* Pierre," he said in conclusion, a trace of anxiety in his tones, "to keep your wits about you in whatever situation you may happen to be placed. Coolness and courage—these are the first requisites of a good detective, *mon garçon*. You are soon to be exposed to the dangers which have been the destruction of so many young residents of Paris; but fear nothing, for I myself will be to-night with the trusty men who have thus far guarded you so well. *Viola tout! success avous!*"

A little while after dark, gorgeously attired, I went forth to meet my adventure. I took my way at once to the Church of St. Germain, and having waited for a few moments, saw approaching me a miserably ragged beggar woman leaning on a stick. As soon as she caught sight of me she cautiously put back the hood that hid her face, and disclosed the features of the well-dressed maid-servant who had spoken to me in the gardens.

"What an object you have made of yourself!" I ejaculated, in surprise. "I should never have known you."

"It was a necessary precaution," she answered. "The prince is coming to Paris, and the princess did not accompany me to pray in the church. But I have good news for you, monsieur. She has consented to see you for once, and if you prove a really good match, doubtless the prince will give consent to your marriage. Only he must not know of this meeting."

"But why did you dress like a beggar?" I inquired.

"So many are on the watch," said the old woman, in a confidential tone. "My lady has a thousand admirers. Oh, I cannot explain, but if you want to see her you can do so this evening—that is all. The Princess Jabrouski knows you are handsome, but how can she tell whether you are witty enough to be her husband unless you talk to her a while?—and she is very witty herself. Come, then, for we have little time to lose!"

"My poor predecessors must have had very little intellect to be imposed upon in this shallow manner," I muttered, as, placing my hand upon the revolver hidden in my bosom, I prepared to follow the old woman.

One fleeting, backward glance I gave ere trusting myself to the deeper shadows before us. Scarce twenty feet behind me, I dimly discerned the crouching form of my uncle, stealing along upon our track like a watchful sleuth-hound, though—as he afterwards confessed—trembling with terror. Behind him, I knew, variously disguised as workmen, beggars and artisans, came a dozen powerful and determined police agents.

On we went, leaving the good quarters of the city, and entering the most hideous street of the worst part of

Paris. At last we reached the Chapel of St. Eloi, near which stood a tall, well-built house, of which every shutter was closed.

"My princess has a palace at home," said the old woman, pausing abruptly before the house. "Here she only lives temporarily. Now, will monsieur permit me to bandage his eyes?"

"On no account!" I cried, emphatically.

I felt no fear with my senses about me; but my caution forbade me to allow myself to be blindfolded.

After a little pause the old woman gave up her efforts to induce me to allow her to tie a handkerchief over my eyes, and bade me remain without the door until she had mentioned my arrival to the princess.

After she had vanished, my uncle rushed out of the darkness, and, silently pressing my hand, whispered:

"Courage!"

By this time I felt that I had need of all my presence of mind. I grasped the weapon hidden in my bosom, and saw that the whistle which was to be the signal that I needed aid was safe within reach, as the door being once more opened, the old woman led me into a passage in which no light glimmered, and up a staircase veiled in utter darkness.

However, nothing occurred to me until, a door being opened, I found myself in a gorgeous apartment, furnished in the most sumptuous style, where, from a sofa covered with crimson satin, the princess herself arose to greet me.

If she had appeared beautiful in daylight, now, in the subdued and tinted rays from the numberless waxen tapers which illumined the apartment, she looked, indeed, a divinity. Her eyes, large and dark as midnight, lit up a face that was perfect to a fault—a face whose witching beauty has haunted me to this day. An exquisitely-shaped mouth was hers, with smiling, scarlet lips, which, parting, disclosed teeth of dazzling whiteness; and a form so perfect in its undulating grace that a sculptor would have paused, chisel in hand, to feast his eyes upon the living embodiment of all his glowing dreams.

In obedience to her smiling request, I seated myself upon the sofa, and she resumed her seat beside me. A few commonplace remarks passed between us, and then a silence fell—a silence that at last was broken by the half-whispered words *mon cher*, uttered in a tone of infinite sweetness, as, stooping forward, the beautiful woman encircled my neck in a gentle clasp, and pressed her warm, dewy lips to my forehead.

The light caress acted upon my nerves like the shock of a galvanic battery, and my blood boiled through my veins like molten lava; I cared not to resist the delicious languor I felt stealing over me, and half closed my eyes as though under the influence of some sensuous narcotic; when I opened them again they encountered a glance from the midnight orbs that the veriest novice could not but understand. Nearer and nearer to mine drooped the lovely woman's face, till I felt her fragrant breath warm on my cheek; nearer and nearer, till her moist, crimson lips were laid on mine in a long passionate caress, and then —she arose to her feet.

"Will monsieur kindly excuse me a moment?" she murmured, softly. "I go to order refreshments, and will rejoin you presently."

Another radiant smile, a slight wave of the jeweled hand, and she glided softly away.

Scarcely had she gone than I leaped to my feet, and with a feeling akin to terror, shook off the subtle spell that seemed to enthrall me. A hundred dark suspicions flashed through my mind, as now—for the first time since I entered the place—I recalled the mission upon which I had come. By a mighty effort I summoned back my wandering wits and began, hurriedly and nervously, to examine the apartment; it was hung with drapery of yellow silk, curiously embroidered, and across one corner fell a heavy curtain.

An irresistible impulse to look behind this curtain possessed me, and stepping forward I drew it back; but immediately recoiled with a smothered cry of horror. There before me was a sort of cabinet or cupboard, in which were placed in a row, on a number of metal dishes, thirty hats—probably relics of the young men who had been this vampire's victims.

My heart sickened within me. I flew to the door; it was locked. I looked for my whistle; it was gone. I fe't for my pistol; that, too, was gone. The woman, during her caresses, had picked my pockets.

I felt that I was doomed. I staggered towards the shuttered window, but at that instant the curtain through which the princess had vanished parted, and three hideous ruffians entered the room. It seemed as if the "sacrifice of Abraham" was indeed to be repeated.

At that supreme moment, however, there came a mighty crash at the window, the heavy shutter crushed inwards, a bundle of splinters, and into the room leaped my uncle, followed by half a dozen determined men.

He had waited till the last moment for the promised signal, and then, terrified beyond bearing, and at the risk of losing his game, had, with the aid of ladder and ax, battered in the window—as it proved, not a second too soon. A few moments later the whole terrible household was under arrest.

The mockery of a trial was given the infernal band, a speedy conviction followed, and they were executed—all but the princess (?), who, by some means, had managed to escape. The whole affair was hushed up as soon as possible, even the executions being secretly performed, the government dreading the effects on the minds of the excitable people.

Before her death, the old hag who played the rôle of waiting-maid confessed that they had banded together about a year before for the purpose of assassination and robbery.

Who the princess (?) was, or whence she came, was never discovered.

CHAPTER SIX

OUTWITTED

IN glancing over the reminiscences of the noted detectives, the reader is often surprised at the keen sagacity and superb strategy displayed in seemingly inexplicable cases, and the generally successful termination of the same. Lost in admiration of detective cunning, he quite forgets the fact that there are as many (if not more) egregious blunders and foolish errors committed in our profession as in any other walk in life. As for myself, although I here emphatically disclaim all title to the adjective "noted," I freely confess that I have made, in the pursuit of my duties, more than one sad mistake, and in this article will candidly relate "how once I played the fool."

Much smuggling was being carried on between the seaport town of Plymouth, England, and Havre, at the time I finished up the case of the Princess Jabrouski. Despite the utmost vigilance of the officers, immense quanti-

ties of silks, laces and Irish poplins were secretly landed in the latter port, while equally great quantities of wines, brandies and oils found their way by some mysterious agency to the former.

The prime mover in these clever smuggleries was shrewdly suspected to be one "Ralph le Noir" (Black Ralph), a man whose renown extended along the whole coast. Strong of nerve, cool of head, with a herculean frame and great strength, his career had been one continuous round of hair-breadth escapes and daring adventures. No one knew the spot he had selected for his home; no one could tell where his renowned schooner lay concealed while discharging the valuable cargoes of liquors, cloths, drugs and other dutiable articles; and no one, it seemed, was adroit enough to catch him napping.

The revenue officers, both French and English, were in despair. Their cleverest concocted schemes had proved futile. Ralph le Noir was more than a match for them. They found themselves baffled and nonplused at every turn. At last, in sheer disgust, and chagrined beyond measure at their ill success, they telegraphed for aid from the Bureau.

After a brief consultation with my uncle, I consented for the nonce to play the rôle of revenue officer, and proceeded directly to Havre, where I was placed at once in command of a small sloop-boat, chartered for the occasion by permission of the department. Five men composed my crew—five shrewd, alert and trustworthy fellows of my own selection.

I had but meager hopes of success when I started, for I had but meager "points" to work upon.

That the smuggler's home was among some of the islands along the coast seemed to be a generally accepted fact; but which, if any of them, had he selected? The Channel islands had been subjected to a thorough search by the English officials, and it seemed but a waste of time for me to go over the same ground. I determined, therefore, to take my course without delay towards the Isles d'Ouessant, which, owing to the rugged, escarped condition of their coast, and being, moreover, exceedingly difficult of access, appeared to me a fitting spot for the smuggler's retreat.

I expected no co-operation from the inhabitants, or, rather, miserable denizens of these rock-bound islands, for bound together by a bond of sympathy, poor and wretched as they were, gold would not have tempted them to betray the smuggler.

A revenue cutter was hated fervently, looked upon as an instrument of oppression to wrest from their hands articles theirs by right of possession. Their ideas of flotsam and jetsam did not extend beyond a fair distribution of the plunder, and a speedy market for the goods.

I hoisted the ensign and pennant over my craft, placed my commission in my pocket, to be used in case of emergency, and soon after bade adieu to my comrades, who waved a last farewell as the sloop rounded the entrance to the harbor.

The afternoon was well advanced as a beautiful, fast-sailing yacht, her white hull flashing in the slanting rays of the sun, came to anchor in a cove situated to leeward of Ushant Island, one of the largest of the Isles d'Ouessant, and seemingly one vast mass of towering crags and pinnacles of granite, which for centuries had braved the fierce storms of the Atlantic, the waves thundering and roaring incessantly along the base of the rock-bound shore, casting the spray high up the smooth face of the gray, quaint rocks. A scarlet ribbon skirted the waterline of the graceful craft, upon whose deck the forms of three men were perceptible to the eager, astonished gaze of the inhabitants, who, irrespective of sex, had hurried down to the beach to watch the new and unusual arrival.

With a quick stroke, the light skiff of the yacht neared the sloping beach. The two men handling the oars were attired in the ordinary garb of seamen, but the third occupant, who stepped languidly ashore, instantly arrested the undivided attention of the islanders, who had never before beheld such an exhibition of wealth and magnificence.

Attired in clothes of a texture new to them, with light curly hair, surmounted by a soft felt hat, blond side-whiskers, eyeglasses, and a heavy gold chain, rather extensively displayed on his immaculate vest, with which he toyed from time to time with a hand superbly gloved, no wonder the stranger who had so suddenly dropped amongst them created a sensation amounting almost to awe.

"*Bon jour*, monsieur! Can I be of service to you, monsieur?" inquired one of the fishermen, a beetle-browed, squint-eyed, shuffling-gaited fellow, who rejoiced in the name of Jacques.

A fawning smile parted his thin, parched lips, displaying the yellow, irregular teeth, with an expression at once grotesque and repulsive.

"That depends upon circumstances, old cross-eyes," replied the young man, carelessly, as he motioned him to one side, when the two men engaged in an earnest conversation.

The balance of the crowd rallied around the boatmen, who, in a loquacious manner, informed their audience that they had been hired to sail the yacht for the young fellow, who had piles of money—that his father was a banker in some city, and the son was out on an extended pleasure cruise.

"What did I tell you, *garçons?*" chuckled one of the yachtmen, pointing to their employer. "Look you at the wealth he is pulling out. Ah, he has plenty of it, and, *pardieu*, he makes it fly, too!"

Many a greedy eye was turned upon the roll of bills which the young man held in his hand.

The dull, sunken orbs of Jacques flared up with a sudden wolfish light as he beheld the mass of crisp notes, and his long, lean fingers worked convulsively, as if impatient to clutch a portion of the coveted wealth.

The banker's son waved them to and fro in his careless, indifferent manner, apparently unmindful of the hungry eyes watching every movement, and the evil passion called into action by the temptation displayed in their midst.

More than one significant glance was exchanged between the rude, rough-garbed islanders, which was not lost upon Jacques. With a stealthy glance from beneath his shaggy eyebrows, he eyed his neighbors with no loving expression as he drew the young man further aside.

In a husky whisper he called the yachtman's attention to a narrow, rugged path winding around the base of a cliff, disappearing amid a growth of low, scrubby trees, already enshrouded in the fast-approaching gloom of night.

"I will meet you there, beside that fallen tree," he said. "Land farther down when you come ashore, so as to keep out of sight of the folks. It wouldn't do for them to know what we are up to. Take none of them into your confidence, monsieur." With a slight nod the young man returned to his boat.

It was dark when he again clambered over the rocks, stealing cautiously forward, keeping within the shadow and gloom of the rough granite boulders. Carefully he avoided all observation from prying eyes, never hesitating

but once, and then only to look back for a moment in the direction of the yacht, which, in the rays of the moon, just rising, casting a broad belt of dancing light across the sparkling waters, stood out in bold relief, the white hull looming up to twice its natural size.

The next moment a dark shadow fell across his path, and Jacques started from behind a huge rock, his form bent and inclined forward as he rubbed his skinny hands together.

"Oh, monsieur, have you brought the money with you—the pretty notes with which to pay for the *eau de vie* I am to get for you?"

"Aye, more than would suffice to load her thrice down with the choicest vintage of Europe," answered the other, carelessly.

"Monsieur uses fine language—too fine for a rough fisherman like me to understand. But the money—that's all right?"

"In my pocket, old Turk, where it will remain until you show me the house of Ralph le Noir, I believe you called him."

"Sh-h-h! not so loud, monsieur!" warned the man nervously. "Somebody might be listening in the shadows about. But come on; it is a long walk, but will pay you in the end. Many a man would like to see what I shall point out to you this night, and that is the cottage of Ralph le Noir. You see, monsieur, this island is surrounded by sunken ledges and rocks without number. None of the charts that I have ever seen have them down, so that cutter—the devil take her—never thoubles this spot of granite. She has sent her boats in before now, but they have always happened to discover nothing but shoal water. But beyond I'll show you the cliff, which has a narrow opening leading to the sea. You might pass it a dozen times from the ocean and fail to notice the channel. But Ralph le Noir knows the way, let it be ever so dark, and by aid of a signal light he takes his range, running the schooner safely by the rocks through the break in the cliff, and, once inside, there is good anchorage, where all the revenue cutters afloat would search in vain for their prey."

"You don't appear to like revenue cutters, Jacques," laughed the young man.

"Like them?" echoed the other, in a tone of suppressed hate; "*sacre bleu*, no! And as for the reptiles that sail in them, I would kill every mother's son of them if I could!"

"How is it that Ralph le Noir has been so fortunate in evading capture?"

"Well, monsieur," replied Jacques, with an evil grin, "we've all helped him out, and lied to the cutter folks when they asked for information. Then when we had reason to suppose that there were prying eyes about, watching the moves of the smuggler, we would slip outside, do you see, run alongside of Ralph le Noir, and, in the twinkling of an eye, take his cargo into our own crafts. A deck-load of wood, or a net or two over the stern, does the rest of the business; and the cutter officers, with all their gilt lace and buttons, are no match for us, for they have never caught anybody foul yet."

"So, so-o-o, that's the way it is done, eh? But come, Monsieur Jacques," and the short, sharp tones of the young man, so different from the usual affected drawl, caused the shuffling figure to start nervously and peer suspiciously from beneath the tattered brim of his hat, as they clambered over the numerous obstacles which obstructed the path leading to the highest point of the island, "how much farther have I to travel in order to purchase the *eau de vie?* I am about exhausted, and I must say the location you have brought me to would cause a party of witches or goblins to howl with joy."

"A few steps more, just in the shadow of that rock ahead, and we shall see the light in Ralph le Noir's cottage. It is carefully hidden from passing craft, who would not dream of anybody living in such a place. Here we are, monsieur, and there, ahead, do you see the light?"

The two had halted on the verge of a declivity, unbroken by the slightest obstacle for full eighty feet. At the base of the precipice broken masses of rock, piled about in the wildest confusion, lined the shores of a small bay apparently hemmed in on all sides by the smooth, solid walls of granite, where no sign of an opening was perceptible.

In a small hollow, or species of cave, which must have been hewn from the solid rock, the outline of a small house could be dimly made out, from which the rays of a lamp streamed faintly forth.

"Do you see yon pine—the bare trunk, I mean—standing up stark and grim-like against the sky?" queried Jacques.

"Yes. What of it? Is it there where we are to obtain the *eau de vie?*"

"No; it is the mark which guides Ralph le Noir to his hiding-place," answered Jacques.

"Ah, ha! and what does that mean?" ejaculated the young man, sharply.

A train of glittering sparks from seaward suddenly rose upon the arch of heaven, mounting higher and higher, until it culminated in a shower of colored stars. At the same instant a powerful light streamed forth from the concealed cottage, glancing across the dark water, tinging them with a blood-red glare as the beacon streamed out its welcome.

"What does it mean?" hissed the low voice of Jacques in the young man's ear, as his hot breath fanned his cheek. "It means, you accursed fool, that you have seen all that you ever will see of Ralph le Noir's doings. Give me the banknotes, quick!"

And springing forward, he threw his long, sinewy arms about the form of the stranger, his fingers failing, however, to reach his throat.

"So, so, that is your game, is it?" uttered the other, sharply, all trace of his usual languid movement at once disappearing. "Now, then, look out, for I'll have no more mercy on you, you treacherous rascal, than I would mete out to a rabid dog!"

Locked in each other's embrace, both strove to the utmost of their strength to obtain the mastery over the other. No doubt the islander, inured to hardship and fatigue, anticipated an easy victory over his adversary; be he soon discovered that he had no child to deal with. Gradually, in their efforts and struggles, the two had approached in dangerous proximity to the verge of the precipice, a fact that was apparently known to both, for they redoubled their efforts. A furious struggle ensued, without resulting in the favor of either party.

Suddenly Jacques evaded the grasp of his adversary, who stood panting before him.

"Give up the money—let me have the notes—and you shall go back in safety," he cried, hoarsely.

"Not a sou!" said the other, determinedly. "Besides, you lie! You intend to murder me."

"Then murder be it!" howled the enraged rascal.

With the rapidity of lightning he sprang toward his foe, a long, wicked-looking knife gleaming in his hand, which he held in readiness to strike.

"Two can play at that game, Monsieur Jacques!" exclaimed the other, as he leaped nimbly aside, leaving the

fisherman with his back to the cliff. "I am not quite such a fool as you supposed me, eh?" and, leveling a revolver, which gleamed with an unpleasant luster in the moonlight, his eye glanced firmly and steadily upon the shrinking, cowering form of the would-be murderer.

"Don't shoot, monsieur—for God's sake drop it; it might go off! I was only fooling with——"

But the sentence was destined never to be completed; the lie he was uttering changed into a scream of terror so wild, so unearthly, that it resembled more the screech of some wild animal, as the tones echoed through the ravines and hollows of the rocky chasms.

Retreating in terror before the threatening muzzle of the revolver, the wretch had forgotten the precipice in his rear.

For a moment the dark form clutched wildly at the empty air, spun half round in its mad efforts to regain a footing, then disappeared in the dark chasm below, from which no sound ascended save the gentle lapping of the miniature waves as they broke on a narrow belt of sand.

In the meanwhile the signal-light from the cottage had disappeared.

It was no longer necessary, for in the bay below, in the full light of the moon, a schooner had anchored.

At that time of night, surrounded by unknown currents and sunken ledges, no one but Ralph le Noir could have threaded the narrow, intricate channel to his haunt.

It was close upon midnight that the watch on board the sloop heard a slight ripple and splashing astern.

The next instant a dark form glided alongside, clambered over the rail, shaking the water from his clothes like a pure Newfoundland.

"I have been on the lookout, M. Chassac, for your signal," said one of the yachtsmen, coming forward, "but I did not dream of your swimming aboard——"

"Just as well, Guillaume," I replied. "Call all hands—quietly now—and drop out at the cove with the ebb. We have work and glorious game before us. I have discovered the hiding-place of Ralph le Noir, where his schooner is at this moment moored."

"Ah, M. Chassac," said the other, admiringly, "but you are the prince of detectives! When I saw you with the wig and fancy toggery on talking to those fellows ashore, it was as much as I could do to keep a straight countenance—to restrain my laughter."

As you have probably surmised, gentle reader, the exquisite, the banker's son, and my noble self were all one and the same person.

I had disguised the yacht, fixed myself up, and wound all the banknotes I had left from my previous month's pay (and that was not much, I assure you,) around some waste paper, until it assumed the appearance of a goodly pile. My whiskers and wig completed a character I had successfully impersonated many times before.

The ruse, in the present instance, had succeeded beyond my wildest expectations. For once, and I am inclined to think once only, the natives had been completely fooled by a revenue cutter officer. I had gained the all-important clue to the smuggler's stronghold, feasted my eyes on the schooner, marked the cunningly-contrived entrance, and now all that remained was to seize the prize.

The thanks of the commanding officer, congratulations from my comrades, a favorable mention to the department, and perhaps speedy promotion, flitted pleasantly through my mind as I proceeded to change my wet attire for my uniform, over which I threw a coarse, gray coat.

When I returned to the deck I had drifted beyond the sight of the villagers, who must have been somewhat mystified at our sudden and mysterious disappearance. There was but one feature of the whole affairs that I regretted, and that was the death of Jacques. But he had precipitated his fate upon himself; it was either his life or mine, and, after all, the treacherous rascal received but his just dues.

Daylight with a roseate hue was tinging the eastern horizon as I guided the sloop through the singular cleft in the solid wall of granite. The men were all on deck, armed and equipped, the ensign floated proudly from the gaff, while the pennant spun out its trailing length in the sharp, crispy morning air.

We were alongside the smuggler's craft before the drowsy watch clearly made out what all the noise and commotion was about. A dozen men rushed up from the forward hatch, only to meet the leveled weapons of my men, while I hurried aft, revolver in hand, to be met in the companionway leading to the cabin by a large, square-built man, whose face, naturally good-natured, was distorted by excitement and passion. My uniform instantly arrested his eye. A heavy frown contracted his brows; a revolver was half raised in his hand, as if he was on the point of using it.

A sharp report, the ping of a bullet as it sped in close proximity to my head, a cry from the broad-chested figure before me, as he fell back into the cabin, and I knew no more.

When consciousness returned, I was stretched out on the quarter-deck, with the cool sea breeze fanning my cheek, while one of my men, with a bucket of salt water, was laving my temples with a hand as gentle as a woman's.

In ten minutes I was myself, and understood all that had happened.

It appeared that, as I was on the point of entering the cabin, and was confronted by the individual, who proved to be no less a personage than Ralph le Noir himself, a portion of the hoisting purchase aloft, blocks and all, became detached in some unaccountable manner, falling heavily to the deck. I had been struck down by a portion, narrowly escaping death, while one of my men, who was a few paces behind me, was knocked senseless, his revolver accidentally going off and inflicting a mortal wound on the smuggler, who had made his final trip and run his last cargo.

Attended by his daughter, who resided in the cottage, the unfortunate man even then lay in the cabin breathing his last.

I forebore from intruding on the scene of misery and affliction, keeping the men out of sight as much as possible, while the ex-crew of the schooner I allowed to go backward and forward between the vessel and shore at their pleasure.

The daughter, whose face and form I had merely caught glimpses of as she flitted to and fro in the cabin, was really a comely-looking girl, with as roguish a pair of black eyes as I ever encountered. Of course they were dimmed with grief then, and no one deplored the sad accident more than myself.

I could not very well move the vessel and the man dying in the cabin, so I delayed two days, keeping a vigilant lookout on the prize. But not a suspicious movement, a sign or whisper did I discover, either on board or among the crew, and still the smuggler lingered, clinging to life to the last.

It lacked but a few hours of sundown, and the deep shadows from the towering cliffs cast thick their somber lengths across the smuggler's deck. I was leaning over the low bulwarks, watching the tiny waves as they lapped

up against the schooner's counter, when a soft hand and a low voice requested me to enter the cabin.

"Father is dying, sir," she said, "and he wants to see you before he—he departs," and her sobs found an echo in my own heart, as I complied with Ralph le Noir's request.

The old smuggler was lying in his berth, with his back turned partially toward me. The cabin was darkened; but I was struck with the ghastly pallor on the old veteran's face, which betokened the near approach of death.

Slowly I approached him, and gently took his hand; and when I saw the man I had so eagerly pursued lying still and mute before me, heard the labored breathing coming short and rapid, beheld the bent form of the maiden, convulsed with emotion, destined soon to be an orphan, I felt like a criminal—a felon who deserved death for the misery I had brought about. It was a painful interview, and I felt relieved when I again reached the deck. Soon after the old steward informed me that it was all over.

The arrangements of the funeral had been completed, and at the request of the daughter, I with all my men were to form the escort of honor around the coffin as it was carried to its last resting-place in a shaded nook ashore.

I suggested the propriety of some of his own men performing the duty, but was silenced when I was told that Ralph le Noir had particularly requested that we should pull the barge containing the corpse.

The coffin was a rude affair, hastily put together, and the cover nailed on, the whole covered with the ensign of the schooner that, under Ralph le Noir's command, had weathered many a gale and run many a rich cargo of the contraband.

Solemnly and carefully my men raised the burden; the ship's bell tolled forth in measured tones, ringing out a funeral dirge across the bay, and, as the oars struck the water, the ensign at the schooner's mast-head was lowered half-mast.

In the stern-sheets of my boat, her face thickly shrouded with a veil, half reclined the form of the smuggler's daughter. I scarcely ventured to look at her as we pulled up the bay, my heart reproached me so.

The tones of the schooner's bell gradually became fainter, and as the boat grated on the beach, the flap of canvas, as it shivered in the wind, fell like a clap of thunder on my astonished ear.

A peal of merry laughter from the smuggler's daughter, as she bounded out of the boat, made me rise in astonishment and dismay, as I gazed after her light form disappearing up the rocky slope leading to the cottage. Good God! could it be possible that grief had bereft her of her senses?

A cry of surprise from my men, a ringing cheer from the schooner, almost convinced me that all hands were tinged with madness; but when I beheld the prize under way, with mainsail set, colors flying from the gaff, jibs run up, and the lug foresail hanging in the brails, imagine, if you can, my horror, my utter amazement.

Heeling over to the land breeze, the schooner headed straight for the opening. With a sharp twang, the main boom gibed over, the tall form of Ralph le Noir was discernible for a moment roaring a final adieu, and that, gentle reader, was the last I ever saw of my prize.

"But the coffin—what was in that?" you ask.

"Well, there was nothing in it but old iron, and sufficient just to keep it from rattling. It was the last exploit, the most daring trick of Ralph le Noir's famous career, and I, the unhappy victim of his superior skill in deceit and duplicity, returned to headquarters, having finally succeeded in completing a report of the affair after demolishing fully one-third of the year's allowance of official paper.

It is needless to add that I failed to receive the flattering communication from the department praising my zeal, all of which my lively imagination had pictured forth in glowing colors, to say nothing of the minor honors I had so fondly anticipated.

Ralph le Noir, with his roguish-eyed daughter, forsook his old haunts, and I never heard of them after.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE STOLEN CASH-BOX

IT was a long time before I recovered from my disappointment over the escape of Ralph le Noir. But crime is ever rampant, and another case soon came up to occupy my attention and tax my skill.

On the afternoon of a July day, between the hours of four and six, occurred the robbery of the Caen, Paris & Nancy R. R. Co., under the most mysterious circumstances.

The facts of the case were as follows:

The paymaster of the road, a man whose integrity had hitherto been regarded as above question or reproach, and his brother, who was acting as his assistant, had been busily engaged during the day in counting out and making up packages of money for the payment of the employees along the road, in accordance with the payroll of the company.

It appeared that the company had recently procured a new safe, with all the modern appliances for security and safety, which was to be used for the reception of money and valuable papers, and that the old one was designed thereafter to be used only for ordinary purposes. Early upon the afternoon in question the cashier, who was about to go home, explicitly cautioned the paymaster against putting his money into the old safe, as it had been found to be insecure.

This instruction was heard by all the clerks in the office, who were already aware of the fact that the old safe was not used for the reception of money. The cashier departed, and the paymaster and his assistant proceeded with their labors, and when their task was completed, and the money all arranged in the iron box ready for distribution upon the morrow, the paymaster, in a moment of forgetfulness, or from pure carelessness, did the very thing he had been cautioned against—he deposited the cash-box in the condemned safe, and locked it.

After doing this, entirely unconscious of the results that were to follow his action, in company with his assistant, he repaired to a hotel close by for tea, after which they were to start out on the evening train. During all the time of his absence the thought never occurred to him that he had either forgotten or willfully disregarded the warning given by the cashier.

After partaking of their repast the two men returned to the office and prepared for their journey. The paymaster opened the safe, and to his wonderment and dismay discovered that the cash-box, which he had but a few minutes before safely locked therein, was missing. He stood for a moment as if thunderstruck, and then the memory of the emphatic warning of the cashier recurred to him with the full force of an accusation. He had deliberately disobeyed orders, and the robbery of the safe was the consequence.

Unable to credit his senses, he made a closer examination of the interior of the safe, but all to no purpose; the money was gone, and with its departure there came a full realization of the position which he would occupy upon the morrow.

It was too late to do anything that night. The cashier resided out of town, and in a sort of despairing stupor the unfortunate man spent the night in a state of mental unrest bordering on frenzy.

The next day ugly rumors were afloat. The public became aware that the paymaster and his assistant had been suspended from duty. Further particulars could not be learned, but the wagging tongue of gossip was soon busy with the reputation of the disgraceful official. Vague charges of previous misdeeds were put in circulation; his neat little home, which was the result of economy and hard labor, was soon alleged to have been purchased with the proceeds of dishonesty.

Everybody seemed to have grown suddenly wise about the antecedents of the poor man, who sat at his fireside with distressed face and aching heart, as, surrounded by his once happy family, he contemplated the dreadful effect of this one act of disobedience. They were paying the fearful penalty. They fell under the social ban. Friends who had been loud in their professions of regard grew cold and dropped away, while the jealous and envious were busy in their damaging remarks and insinuations.

At the office of the company the matter was not spoken of. The order had been issued and no one was allowed to mention the subject. It seemed that with the discharge of the officers the matter was to be dropped and no further proceedings were to be had in the matter.

After a while the affair passed away, and, except for the manly defense that was made by one of the newspapers of Paris, which had investigated the antecedents of the paymaster, public criticism had consigned him to the pillory and society had ostracised him entirely.

This paper, however, declared its belief in his innocence. They declared that he was a man of most economical habits; he did not drink, smoke or gamble; and, with their defense, manly and upright as it was, comment ceased and the subject was seemingly dropped.

Not so, however. Immediately upon the perpetration of the robbery I had been informed of the circumstances. Upon my advice the company had outwardly refrained from an extended examination. Under my instructions the impression was created that no investigation was to be made into the matter and that with the discharge of the derelict paymaster all proceedings in the case were at an end.

For myself, I was fully convinced at the outset of the innocence of the two men who suffered under the disgrace thus brought about. The record of their previous good and unimpeachable character weighed very heavily in my judgment. Dark as was the cloud that seemed to hang over these two men, they never betrayed the slightest embarrassment peculiar to persons guilty of crime; though they were downcast and sorrowful, they maintained an upright and fearless demeanor, and I determined to effect their complete vindication as well as to discover the real criminal, and, if possible, secure the return of the stolen money.

The habits of every clerk in the office were closely but unobservedly watched, and very soon I discovered one individual among the number who, I thought, would not escape the web that I would weave around him, and who, I had no doubt, was the successful thief. A bright, active young man was he, of perhaps three-and-twenty years, handsome of face, graceful in form and movement, pleasing and winning in address. But the crafty light which at times flashed into his bold, black eyes when he imagined himself unobserved would warn a cautious person to beware of placing any deep trust in him.

Although but a few months in the office, and in receipt of a good salary, he, but a short space after the robbery, politely informed his employers that he had tired of the restraints of office duty, and resigned his situation.

From that moment I shadowed him night and day, from one place of amusement to another—from theater to theater, from brothel to brothel. From the apparently quiet and respected young man of a few weeks before, he had suddenly developed into a veritable "swell," a shameless bacchanal, a *roué* of the worst type. He had, in brief time indeed, thoroughly familarized himself with all that was gay, exciting and debasing in Paris life.

He was, I learned, of a respectable family, and the new habits which he was now forming created sorrow and alarm in the household in which he had been tenderly reared and carefully nurtured. But if he was the guilty man, as I felt convinced, he must be punished. The reputation of two innocent men demanded this, and the purity of the outraged law required it.

At last, one evening, in the Hotel de Paris, I accidentally formed his acquaintance. He seemed to be immediately taken with my appearance (I was made up as a swell of the most extreme type), my foppish airs and slangy utterances seemed to suit his peculiar disposition to a nicety, and we soon became inseparable companions.

Wherever the young man, whom we will call Henri Cartier, desired to go, he found a willing party in Martin Mellville, alias Pierre Chassac. Arm in arm we often strolled into the enchanting Jardin Mabille, at the height of its fame and glory; from thence to the opera, a clubhouse, a cabaret, anywhere, in fact, the capricious fancy of my companion suggested. And all this time I kept my eyes and ears opened for the slightest hint that might tend to confirm my suspicion; but my watchfulness was unrewarded.

Several months had now elapsed, and the natal day of another year had been duly ushered in. Shortly after this time a grand fête and festival was announced at Fontainebleau, and yielding to Cartier's solicitations I accompanied him to that beautiful resort, for the purpose of discovering what excitement was to be found at the famous "pleasure gardens of the kings."

A glorious time we had, indeed, for the late clerk threw his money about like a prince. But our "good time" lasted for a few days only. Awakening one morning after a particularly jolly night, we were confronted with the alarming fact that our exchequer was empty, or at least nearly so. My companion in a rage declared that his pocket had been picked. Such was the fact, for, determined to bring matters to a crisis, I, myself, had coolly appropriated his purse but a few hours previous. I joined him, however, in bemoaning the unfortunate circumstance, when there was so much pleasure to be had in Fontainebleau, and Paris was no longer sufficiently attractive for us to return.

We had projected a trip to Lyons when we left home, but how was the journey to be accomplished without money? My own finances, I frankly confessed to my companion, were at the lowest possible ebb. We held a long consultation, at the end of which I advised an immediate return to the metropolis. But my companion declared himself equal to the emergency (as I had surmised he would), and volunteered to supply the necessary funds, provided I would consent to remain at Fontainebleau a day or two, so that he could go to Paris and return

To this I demurred.

"If you go back to Paris," I said, "you will not return, and then I'll be in a fine scrape, without money or friends, in a strange city."

"Do not be alarmed about that," replied the ex-clerk. "I will return as soon as possible, and with plenty of money to see us through our trip."

"But what guarantee have I that you will return?" I queried in a fretful tone; "and if you do not, how am I likely to get back myself without help?"

Under the excitement of this little debate, the tongue of the ex-clerk became considerably loosened, and he made a revelation (confidentially, of course) that fully convinced me that Henri Cartier knew exactly what he was about.

The ex-clerk did know exactly where he could put his hands upon the funds he wanted; but they must be obtained from a source that neither his friends, his relatives, nor any other person living, could dream of—and, of course, with replenished pockets he would return to Fontainebleau immediately.

The arguments were too conclusive, the information was too satisfactory, and Henri Cartier started upon his return to Paris, while I was to await his coming at Fontainebleau.

Scarcely had he left the hotel, however, than I hastily scribbled a message in cipher, placed it in my pocket, and calling the clerk, paid our bill for the time we had sojourned there. Then, making a few slight changes in my costume, I started also for the depot.

Tossing the message to the operator at the station, with the required fee for transmitting, I sprang aboard the already moving train, one car behind that occupied by my late chum.

The message I had dispatched was addressed to my uncle, M. Leon Chassac, and read as follows:

"We have just started for Paris, and will be due at 1:30. Cartier does not know that I am aboard. He returns for money. Says he stole the cash-box, and that it is hidden in his mother's garden, near the tree. He expects to return to Fontainebleau immediately. PIERRE."

Long before we arrived at Paris, M. Leon Chassac was in possession of the paymaster's long-lost box, and another trusty detective, with one of the prefect's police, awaited the arrival of the train which carried the financier upon his return for his buried treasure.

The train arrived, and as Henry Cartier alighted he was welcomed back by those two new acquaintances, who insisted upon enjoying his society and bearing him company. He desired to go home, but he was induced to proceed to the Prefect's office, as he was suspected of some complicity with the almost forgotten robbery of the paymaster's cash-box.

His surprise at such a reception, and such a request, must, of course, be imagined, and his semblance of perfect astonishment at being even suspected of such a thing was a very excellent piece of acting indeed.

He explained that he had resigned from his position of his own accord, and that no one had even hinted a breath of suspicion against him, and that his character was above reproach. His air of injured innocence was very nicely assumed, and was maintained all the way from the depot to the office of the prefect.

Arrived at the office of that functionary, however, he found an interesting party awaiting him, while upon the table in the center of the room stood the resurrected cash-box—a dumb but convincing witness of his duplicity and his crime. Here, too, were gathered the cashier of the railroad company, the paymaster and his assistant, M. Leon Chassac, and myself. Before this array the courage of the young man gave way completely, and he broke into tears.

The end had been accomplished. One reputation had been destroyed, but two others had been completely vindicated. The innocence of the paymaster was proven, and the crime of the guilty thief was fully shown.

The money was nearly all recovered, and the young man made a full confession of his actions.

In one home, that night, there reigned a profound sorrow for a degenerate child, who had brought ruin upon his own family and disgrace upon the fair fame of two innocent men.

In another home the joyful face of a fond wife looked into the beaming eyes of a vindicated husband, while happy children, with merry voices, sounded the gladsome tidings.

Henri Cartier was tried and convicted, and expiated his crime by a long term of imprisonment.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE APACHES OF PARIS

At the time of which I write, that quarter of Paris between the Fontainebleau road and the Seine, and indeed the whole precinct from the outer boulevard to the barrier fortifications, possessed anything but an enviable reputation. It was the nocturnal haunt of the worst class of Parisian criminals. Escaped convicts and thieves of all classes here assembled. Nocturnal prowlers, birds of prey, and last, but not least, it was the favorite resort of the professional garroters, the terrible Apaches of Paris.

The night of March 20 was cold and damp. A slight fall of snow had made the streets slushy, and mud rendered the crossings at many points in the neighborhood of the Barriere D'Italie, which is within the disreputable quarter of which I write, almost impassable to the foot-passer.

Just at the corner of a dark, gloomy court stood a squalid inn of the lowest class, which bore the suggestive name of "The Fox-holes"; and toward it, on this night of March, at about midnight, came a tall, thin man, enveloped in a long blue cloak, and wearing a high, brigand hat, at the time so popular with the sporting classes.

Without hesitation, and like one perfectly familiar with the place, this individual threw open the door of the inn and entered.

The place he looked in upon was a type of its kind.

The outer door opened upon a flight of stairs, which were very steep and short, and which led directly down into the room, the whole of which could be plainly seen from the outer door. The room was low, and the walls black with dirt and age. Across one side extended a bar, and various small tables were scattered about. At them were seated a dozen or more of the banditti of the metropolis, both men and women.

The arrival of the newcomer, who rapidly descended the stairs, caused a sudden hush in the animated conversation which prevailed, and curious glances were turned toward him, while one whispered to another:

"Who is he?" Evidently the man in the cloak was a stranger, and if so, this was a very unsafe place in which to venture alone.

A small, dark man, who had been seated at a table near the door, glided to the head of the stairs, and stood there unobserved by the new arrival. In his hand he carried a knife, which flashed in the light with a cold, steely glitter,

no less murderous than the baleful gleam in the eyes of the man who grasped it.

The man in the cloak saw that his coming had produced an unfavorable impression. Distrust and suspicion were written upon all the fierce faces which looked upon him so intently.

If he experienced any fear he did not show it, but with a casual salutation, intended to be general in its character, he sauntered to the bar and called for a glass of brandy.

At the same moment a large man, the most remarkable point in whose appearance was his terrible long and claw-like hands, came directly to the stranger's side, and striking him upon the shoulder, said:

"Come, this won't do. You seem to know no one here. Who are you? What are you?"

"I am a stranger to those present, it is true," answered the other, "but I am one of you. I am from Toulon."

"From Toulon—from the galleys?"

"Aye, from the galleys. See!" and the man suddenly exposed the brand which is placed upon all who are sentenced to the galleys for life.

In a moment the occupants of the inn had crowded around the ex-galley slave, and professions of sympathy and friendship were offered by all.

"Your hand, brother," said he who had at first accosted the escaped convict. "Pardon my rudeness, but I thought first you might be a 'music-man' " (meaning an informer).

"Certainly, my boy," answered the new arrival. "If I mistake not your name is Boudette—Jean Boudette—who escaped from Toulon a few months since. That," he went on, "was before I went there."

"You are right," answered Boudette. "And your name, brother?"

"My name is——"

"Cyperian Renard!" shouted the dark man at the head of the stairs. "I have just read your description in the regard bill," and he flourished the paper. "The description is perfect. Take care, my chic, or they will drag you back to the barges. Your disguise is imperfect."

"Let me see the paper," said Renard.

Taking it, he read: "Five thousand francs for the capture of Cyperian Renard"; then followed a minute description.

"Ah, ha!" laughed the convict, "they have made a good picture of me, but it will do them no good. I leave Paris as soon as I can raise the wind, and until I go I shall lay low."

"And you lack funds?" said Boudette.

"Yes, I am penniless—not a sou."

"Then join us, and you shall have plenty of cash. I don't know whether our fame has reached the boys at Toulon, but we are the terror of Paris. Cyperian Renard, you see before you the dreaded Apaches of Paris; the silent, mysterious workers who have for months defied the police and the gendarmes."

"You honor me with your confidence," said Renard, with a slight bow; "I will join you. Let me be one of you from this moment."

"What say you, brothers?" demanded Boudette, turning to the crowd; "shall he become one of us?"

"Yes! yes!" was the unanimous cry, and one after another the banded criminals shook the hand of the new man.

"This very night you shall be tested," continued Boudette. "We have a job on hand. Lizette has gone forth to decoy a rich old shop-keeper here, and you shall garrote him. His purse will be a heavy one, and besides we owe him one for giving away a comrade who sought to hide in his shop. He is a music-man."

A curious, anxious expression came into the face of the new brother at the words of the chief of the Apaches. Perhaps he did not like the idea of strangling a man in cold blood, for he glanced about the room quickly, and his eyes had in them for an instant the expression of a trapped animal, that vainly seeks some way of escape. But he said:

"Ah, a music-man; then we'll shut off his music," and he laughed, exultantly.

"Hark!" admonished some one of the party.

All became silent, and the Apaches listened for a moment. The sound of voices could be plainly heard. The next moment the door of the inn was opened, and a very pretty little grisette entered, half leading a partially intoxicated man of past middle age.

At sight of the girl the inmates of the place set up a shout, and the next moment the decoy and her victim were among the Apaches.

At sight of the intoxicated shopman's face the escaped convict, Cyperian Renard, started back as though he had received a violent blow, and a half-stifled exclamation burst from his lips.

In the confusion of the moment this was unnoticed by the Apaches, for all their attention was taken by the man whom Lizette had decoyed to his doom.

What caused the violent emotion of Cyperian, the galley-slave?

Twelve years before the old shop-keeper turned from his house his only son, because he was wild, idle and worthless. The boy suddenly awoke to the realities of life, and determined to make himself a name among men. Naturally very quick of perception, intelligent and a great mimic, he thought of trying the stage, when chance threw him in the way of my uncle, M. Leon Chassac, Chief of the Secret Detective Bureau. Fancying the appearance of the young man, my worthy relative had at once enrolled him as one of the force. He arose rapidly to eminence in the profession, became my trusted chum and comrade in some of the most perilous of my adventures, and commanded the respect and admiration of all who knew him. During all the years that had passed since he left his home, he had not once seen his father until this night when he met him in the den of the Apaches.

The old shop-keeper was the father of the man who called himself Cyperian Renard, and the latter was none other than M. Javert, of the secret police. The character of Cyperian Renard, which he had assumed to visit "The Fox-holes," had fallen to him almost providentially, for the night before we had captured the real Renard.

The fact of this important arrest we had kept a profound secret, and it was known to none outside of the police force; for M. Javert, who in form and features greatly resembled the captured convict, had at once conceived the idea of adopting the personality of the notorious criminal for the purpose of penetrating the dens of crime in the neighborhod of the fortifications. He hoped thus to win the confidence of the bandits, and to learn something of the terrible organization, "The Apaches," as they were called, who had so long defied the entire police force.

M. Javert had for some time contemplated making an investigation among the drinking-shops of this precinct, and "The Fox-holes" had been marked as a particularly suspicious place. Hence it was that he had visited it first. He had arranged that no one was to follow him, as he knew that he could only find out the secrets which he desired to learn by the exertion of the greatest cunning and the most extreme caution. So it was that he came to "The Fox-holes" entirely alone. In any emergency, come what might, he had but himself to depend upon. He could hope for no outside assistance.

The shop-keeper reeled around among the inmates of

the den, hobnobbed with the men, and ogled the girls. Old Raoul Javert's two weaknesses were wine and women, and it now seemed they were to cost him his life. Deft fingers had already relieved him of his pocket-book, watch, and all articles of jewelry, when Boudette whispered:

"Cyperian Renard, the time has come to see you show your mettle. When I give the signal thus," and he rapped upon the bar, "glide behind the music-man and strangle him, garrote him; and when he is dead you are truly one of the Apaches of Paris."

It was a terrible situation. M. Javert was commanded to assassinate his own father. What excuse could he offer? How could he avoid the commission of this terrible deed without betraying his identity? To hesitate meant to betray himself to death without saving his father.

M. Javert had been placed in many desperate and trying situations, but this was the most desperate of them all.

A thousand thoughts flashed through his active brain, but not one upon which he could act with expediency.

"What shall I do? What shall I do?" was the question he asked himself again and again.

But no answer could he find.

Suddenly Boudette gave the promised signal.

Mechanically, scarce knowing what he did, the detective started toward his father. As he did so, the intoxicated shopman put out his hand. Instinctively, M. Javert grasped it. As his own hand received the pressure of the other, he once more started in astonishment and gazed amazedly upon the shopman; for the intoxicated man had just given him the grip of the secret police.

What could it mean?

Like the lightning's flash the truth suddenly burst upon the detective's mind, and assurance was made doubly sure by a sly wink from the drunken, or rather apparently drunken, man.

"Yes, yes," thought the detective. "This man is certainly a member of the police, and he is not my father, but his make-up is the same, and he has assumed his name for some purpose."

But there was no time for thought. The situation demanded instantaneous action. When the seemingly drunken man shook the other's hand, he muttered some incoherent words, and the gang of criminals did not understand what had occurred. But Boudette was watching him closely, and the officer knew that some move must be made at once.

At that moment the seeming shopman turned his back upon the detective, and the latter threw both arms about his neck, as if to garrote him, whispering in his ear at the same time:

"Struggle towards the door!"

"All right," was the answer breathed in the officer's ear.

The detective tightened his grasp upon the neck of the other, and they struggled toward the stairs.

The band of Apaches had sprung to their feet and were watching the struggle between the strangler and his victim with deepest interest.

They had in the strife reached the foot of the stairs, when suddenly Boudette and the small, dark man bounded past them to the topmost step of the flight, ready to prevent any possibility of escape.

The farce of the pretended garroting could be carried no further, and M. Javert allowed the other to throw him off.

As he did so the shopman drew a revolver. M. Javert also whipped out a weapon.

"What! do you let the music-man get the best of you? This is not what I expected from you, Renard," cried Boudette, savagely.

Dissatisfied at the turn affairs were taking, the gang had drawn weapons and menaced the shopman, some cursing him, and others taunting Renard.

Suddenly the shopman sprang, with the leap of a panther, up the stairs. With a yell, Renard bounded after him.

The next moment they were struggling with Boudette and the small, dark man who stood with him upon the upper step in front of the door.

The Apaches could no longer be deceived; they saw that Renard was fighting upon the side of the shopman—that he was favoring his escape.

"Renard is against us! Upon them, brothers! Kill them both!" shouted Boudette, as he and his companion struggled desperately with Renard and the shopman.

The gang surged up the stairs.

Suddenly there was a crash. The lower part of the stairs gave way beneath the unusual weight with which they were taxed, and fell, with all upon them, to the floor.

As the stairs fell, Renard and the shopman at the top of the stairs hurled Boudette and his companion aside, and leaped desperately upward at the door.

It was a leap for life, and they strained every muscle in the effort. They precipitated themselves against the door with terrific force, and it flew open, throwing the two escaping men upon their hands and knees into the street.

The fall of part of the stairs prevented immediate pursuit, on the part of the Apaches.

Gaining their feet, the two men ran at full speed toward the Barriere police-station.

"You don't recognize me yet, I see," said he who had assumed the character of the shopman.

As they ran, M. Javert answered:

"I confess I do not."

The other laughed.

"Now do you?" he queried, at the same time pulling hat and wig from his head, and turning his face toward his companion.

M. Javert uttered an exclamation of surprise.

"What? Pierre Chassac!" he ejaculated, staring at me in a bewildered manner.

"Even so, *mon ami*," I replied; "and this is how I came to be in 'The Fox-holes' to-night. Yesterday, by chance, I saw your father in company with Lizette, and knowing her to be a bad one, whose beauty was used to lure men to danger or death, and knowing also a little of your father's failings, I waited until she had left him, and then told him of her character. He informed me that he had an engagement with her to-night. I had long wished to obtain sufficient evidence to secure her arrest and conviction, so I persuaded your father to lend me his wardrobe, and making up exactly like him, I repaired to the rendezvous. Lizette seemed to want to get me intoxicated, so I assumed to become so, and then she led me here to 'The Fox-holes.' *Voila tout, mon ami.*"

We soon reached the police-station; a squad of gendarmes was at once dispatched to arrest the Apaches, but when they reached "The Foxholes" the birds had flnown. But the knowledge which M. Javert and myself had gained at that infamous resort eventually led to the arrest of the leader of the gang, and the abatement of the reign of terror which this band of stranglers had instituted.

CHAPTER IX

AMONG SHARPS

BESIDES the Apaches Paris was infested by another organized gang of desperadoes of the worst character —blacklegs, confidence men, forgers, and pickpockets.

Strange as it may seem, the latter branch of the fraternity caused us more trouble and worriment than all the others put together.

Complaints flowed fast and thick into the office; but though the police were perpetually on the *qui vive*, all efforts to discover the criminals amounted to naught. Shrewd rascals they were, indeed, and the entire detective force felt nettled and chagrined at the audacious success and skillful evasion of arrest.

Now, pickpockets have always been objects of great interest to me, for I regarded them as infinitely superior in nerve, audacity, and cool cunning, to the midnight burglar, or the footpad, who, revolver in hand, demands of the solitary wayfarer:

"Your money or your life!" And ere narrating the incidents which properly come under the caption of this chapter, let me relate a few points I have gleaned during my career concerning the "light-fingered gentry."

Pickpockets, then, are a class of thieves who must be especially fitted for the "profession." They go through a course of instruction, as a general thing, and learn it as a child learns to read. Old experts have reduced the business to a science, and some of these who are advanced in years, or otherwise incapacitated for active work on their own hook, devote all their time to instructing thieves and putting up jobs for them. It is a peculiar profession, and requires peculiar talents, as well as peculiar surroundings and circumstances to make it a success. The pickpocket, out of a large city, ceases to be a "great artist," and in a poorer town or village would degenerate into a mere burglar, or even become honest or prosperous.

The pickpocket never commits violence, as the footpad, the burglar or the garroter does. He performs his work unostentatiously, unobtrusively—I might say delicately. He is a judge of character, too, and is a sort of detective in his way, knowing at a glance the kind of a man whose watch is likely to be solid and valuable, and not belonging to the order of flash jewelry. Long experience has made him about as good a judge of the value of a thing as a jeweler or a pawnbroker. There is a daily danger in his mode of life which, no doubt, has attractions for the venturous. He goes forth with his liberty in his hand; he lives in the face of danger; he sees companions and friends perpetually struck off the roll of "gentlemen-at-large"; he knows not when his own day of doom may arrive.

But with all its "golden chances," the business of the professional pickpocket seldom pays—indeed, there are very few rich thieves of any description. They nearly all die paupers, or in prison, or in their boots; many at the hands of their comrades. Fear and guilt are the passions that sway them. There is no such thing as honor among thieves. Some, it is true, have amassed wealth, but to how many of them has it been of use?

In plying their nefarious operations some pickpockets prefer to work alone, but as a general thing they travel in organized mobs of three. It takes three men to do a neat and safe job, except in dense crowds, where the usual precautions are not necessary; but, even then, they nearly always work in gangs. In the parlance of the craft these three individuals are known respectively as the "wire," the "stall," and the "cover." The "wire" is the pickpocket himself; the "stall" does duty by attracting the man's or woman's attention while the operator's fingers are in the pocket; the "cover" places himself in a position so that the movements of the "wire" cannot be observed. It is very often the case that the "wire" is a boy, while the other two are men. For the mere business of relieving pockets of their contents, boys are the ablest adepts. Many a street arab has been driven to the work by want and bad company at an early age, becoming a professional long before he has attained his growth.

When pickpockets are working in a great crowd, the chief manipulator goes ahead. Selecting a victim, he quietly "fans" his pockets to see if there is anything in them. "Fanning" the pocket, let me here explain, is the slang phrase for feeling it in the light, cautious manner which is learned by training. A sharp thief never puts his hand into a man's pocket at random, but goes through the "fanning" process at first, and locates the object he desires to "pinch." Selecting his opportunity, the operator then slips his hand daintily into the pocket, and takes out the purse of money or other articles, which he immediately passes back to one of his comrades. Sometimes it changes hands three or four times in as many seconds, and even if the operator is nabbed immediately after the work is done, nothing is found on his person to convict him of the theft. This is the usual mode of operating, and seldom are any of the adroit rascals detected.

But to resume my narrative.

Among the first of the many victims of the mysterious robberies I have referred to that called to secure our services, was M. Lemaine Montague, a young man of great wealth, and well known in political circles.

Coming from the theater the evening before, he had been relieved of a heavy gold chain, on which was suspended a most valuable ring. M. Montague was not concerned about the money value of the articles; indeed, his whole effort was directed toward the recovery of the ring, which he prized for its associations, rather than its intrinsic worth.

On questioning M. Montague, I gleaned the following:

As he was leaving the theater, and but a few moments before discovering his loss, he noticed two young men of aristocratic bearing and dressed in the extreme of fashion, who, on reaching the doorway, suddenly paused, and in low and rapid tones engaged in a warm dispute on some apparently weighty topic.

"Come on, *mon ami*," entreated No. 1, after a moment, and speaking in a louder tone.

"Oh, no; I don't want to go there!" answered No. 2.

"But I say, come on, *mon ami;* I will make it all right," and the speaker grasped his companion by the coat in a friendly endeavor to persuade him.

"Well, now I'll go!" said the other, and the peculiar inflection on the word "now" caught the ear of M. Montague at once.

During this amicable altercation, the young men jostled against more than one person (M. Montague among the number), and for a few seconds blockaded the passage.

My client had given no further thought to this occurrence until my queries recalled it to his mind. He had caused an advertisement to be inserted in the papers offering a reward greater than the value of the articles, but to this there came no answer. Fortunately he was able to give a pretty full description of the two men, and while he could hardly believe they stole the jewelry at that time, I was certain of it. The young men were strangers, I concluded, and agents were sent out to hunt up any pair of young men who might be haunting thieves' resorts.

The next day another gentleman reported a loss by a similar method. A day or two later another party had the same story to tell.

I became exceedingly annoyed at the affairs, and began to fear the ring would find its way into the melting-pot ere I could capture the rascals. I placed men at all the principal theater entrances to watch for the young men, but all to no purpose.

About a week later, a most estimable gentleman, a deacon in a fashionable church, came to repeat the same

tale, with a variation—instead of at the theater, it was at the church.

Without doubt the clever rascals had surmised the means adopted to secure their capture, and had changed the field of their operations accordingly.

I hunted up all the victims of this game in the hope of finding some "point," but did not succeed. Two of them were my clients, and, singularly enough, both of them remembered the peculiar emphasis given the word "now." This word then, I felt assured, was a well-understood signal between the rogues, signifying that their victim was "spotted," or already relieved of his valuables.

Another victim was reported in the papers, and he, too, had been jostled while coming out of the Church St. Martin, and the public were treated to lengthy denunciations of an incompetent police and detective force.

The continual delay in the solution of an apparently simple operation exasperated me, and I felt that if I did not soon effected an "opening" I would lose caste with my comrades, and be of little use to my clients.

But fortune favored me.

While pondering over the matter one morning, vainly endeavoring to trace a likeness between the two accomplished young gentlemen who had occupied my thoughts so much of late, and any of the many "crooks" that were registered upon our dockets, my meditations were suddenly interrupted by the opening of the door; and glancing up half-impatiently, my eyes rested upon as perfect a specimen of the genus "gentleman" [illegible]

"Last night, monsieur. You see, I went to the museum; father told me I must not go to the theater, so I went to the museum. Ah, *ciel*, but it was not an elegant place. First, *une petite demoiselle* came out and danced like a fairy; and then a bold-eyed *garçon*——"

"Who was with you?" I asked, not caring to hear M. Lapin's analysis of the performance he had witnessed.

"A young man from Bellevile, monsieur. His name is Requin—Pierre Requin. I think I know a cousin of his at St. Armand."

"Did he come to the city with you?"

"*Parbleu*, no! I met him at the inn, for the first time, yesterday morning. He seems to be a very clever fellow."

"No doubt of it," I said dryly.

"He knows the way around the city better than I do," continued Monsieur Lapin, "so I was very glad to meet him. He has kept me out of one or two scrapes already. After dinner, a fellow stopped us in the street, and offered to sell me a ticket to go through the gardens of the Tuileries for three francs. But M. Requin told me not to do it. Afterwards we went through the gardens without paying anything, so I knew Requin was no rogue."

"Perhaps he is not."

"I know he isn't, M. Chassac," said Lapin, earnestly. "He came from the country, but he has been in Paris once before, and knows all about it."

"Where is he now?" I asked.

"That I can't tell [illegible]

It was now nine o'clock, and they left the hotel together. I followed them to a store in the Rue Madeleine, where I saw M. Jean receive his four hundred and thirty-five francs. He rolled up the amount in a piece of paper, and very carefully placed it in his pocket.

His companion watched his proceedings with evident interest. Pierre Requin was dressed like a countryman, and I was not surprised that Monsieur Jean had taken him for what he purported to be.

As this brace of "green" ones reached the variety shop opposite Vidette Square, I saw Requin stop and fix his eyes on an accordion (that instrument so dear to the French countryman's heart), which was reposing in the show-case. Jean Lapin stopped, too, and after testing the instrument to his satisfaction, the former proceeded to drive a sharp trade with the seller. I contrived to place myself around the corner of the shop so as not to be seen, but in such a position that I could hear all that was said. The trade was struck, and it only remained to pay for the dulcet instrument, the price of which was sixty-five francs.

"*Peste.* I haven't any small notes now," said Requin, making great show of rummaging his pockets as the salesman moved away to do up the instrument.

"Perhaps the salesman can change your note," suggested Jean.

"I have nothing but a five-hundred-franc note, and I don't like to offer him that."

"I guess he can change it," said Jean.

"Suppose you lend me sixty-five francs—and I will pay you back when we get to the hotel," suggested Requin.

"*Bien*," Jean began, evidently not liking the proposition.

"I'll tell you how we can fix it, *mon ami*," continued Requin, evidently pained by the want of confidence his friend displayed. "You shall take the five-hundred-franc note, and give me the four hundred and thirty-five you got. When we get back to the hotel, you can get it changed, and pay me the sixty-five francs."

That looked like a fair proposition to Monsieur Jean, and Requin wanted to show that, though his friend had no confidence in him, he was entirely unsuspicious.

"I'll do that, *mon ami*," replied Jean; and no doubt he thought if Requin did not appear, he should make sixty-five francs by the operation.

Jean handed over the four hundred and thirty-five francs, and received the five-hundred-franc note.

"Now," said Requin, "I must drop over to see my cousin, and I will meet you at the hotel at eleven o'clock."

"I'll be there," replied Jean.

Requin immediately turned the corner, and passing through a narrow alley emerged into the Rue des Dromes; and, scarce a dozen feet behind, I followed him. At first I felt strongly tempted to at once arrest this rogue, but a certain suspicion which had been slowly forming in my mind deterred me, and I suffered him to proceed. I was not sorry after that I did so.

On he went rapidly for three or four squares, when a passing street car attracted his attention, and hailing it, he got aboard. A square farther down I also entered the car.

The vehicle was crowded, and glancing about, I beheld Requin standing near the center, midway between the settees, and facing a keen-eyed, shrewd-looking gentleman of perhaps fifty years. This gentleman, whom I at once recognized as M. Baptiste Lemaire, a noted banker and financier, was irreproachably attired, and in his immaculate shirt-front sparkled a diamond stud of great size and value, which was fastened to the bosom on either side by a slender gold chain. Upon this costly gem Requin's eyes were fastened greedily, and I felt assured that he would make at least one effort to possess himself of the glittering bauble.

I watched with eager interest, but I was entirely unprepared for the exhibition of nerve and cunning which this "prince of his craft" displayed almost in sight of the throng about him, as well as for the audacious success of a clever and quickly concocted scheme. One hasty glance about him, and Requin commenced operations.

Drawing a newspaper from his pocket, he opened its folds and began reading. Soon the movement of the car, or some other cause, brought him nearer and nearer to the unsuspecting banker, and the newspaper, now wide open, was held out nearly under his chin. Of course, with this screen between his face and the remainder of his person, the shirt-front, with its sparkling ornament, was completely hidden from view. Under the cover of the paper, the ingenious Requin succeeded in cutting the gold chain upon either side, and in a few moments the diamond stud was dexterously removed from its snow-white resting-place to the pocket of the daring thief. So rapidly and quietly was this done, that even I, who was watching every movement, was scarcely aware of its success, till Requin, hastily folding his paper, at once left the car. An instant later, I, too, alighted, and again along the Rue des Dromes was quietly "shadowing" my man.

At the corner of the Rue des Dromes and the Rue Dunot stood a fruit-dealer's booth—behind the counter a young fellow dressed in dilapidated clothing. To my inexpressible surprise Requin turned into this booth, and, after a hasty nod of recognition to the attendant, disappeared beneath the counter.

When he raised himself to sight again his whole appearance had undergone a total change. The mustache that had adorned his lip was no longer there, a slouched hat almost entirely concealed his features, and a long linen coat was buttoned tightly about his form.

"Now," he said, with a short laugh, addressnig his companion, "I guess I'll do."

"Any luck?" queried the other.

"*Pardieu*, yes! Softly, *mon ami*," and a customer approaching at that moment, they both began to busy themselves about the stand.

For a brief space I stood irresolute—undecided as to what course to pursue; but on reflection determined to adhere to my original plan.

Stepping into a neighboring tailoring establishment, I had a few words with the gentlemanly proprietor, made a few changes in my costume, and then stationed myself at a window where I could observe every movement of the precious pair opposite me.

Patiently I stood my watch till the shades of evening began to fall, when I noticed the fruit dealers (?) gathering up their wares preparatory to departure; and slipping quietly from the shop I prepared to shadow them.

Having closed their booth, they hastened at once along the Rue Junot, along the Rue St. Andre, along a half-dozen other dimly lighted streets, until they reached the Barriere du Roule, one of the darkest quarters of the city.

Here they paused a moment, and after casting a hasty glance about them noiselessly, let themselves into what appeared to be a deserted house.

Taking my stand again outside the house, I argued the matter pro and con, half undecided as to what course to pursue. A half-hour or more elapsed, and I was on the point of stepping forth from my concealment to reconnoiter the interior of the dwelling, when the door opened, and two figures, closely enveloped in great-coats, emerged. Into a car they jumped. I entered the car at the next corner, but, on looking about, could see nothing of the great-coated figures.

Two young men were seated inside, however, both about the same height. The long coats were now wrapped in a bundle, which was tightly rolled up in a shawl-strap. They were both fashionably dressed, and had every appearance of belonging to the upper-ten. Then I knew I had them.

During their devout attendance at the Church de St. Heloise that evening, I telegraphed to headquarters for aid, and when the meeting was dismissed I was on hand to catch them in the very act of relieving an unsuspecting old gentleman of his watch and purse. Despite this fact, they had the colossal impudence to loudly and indignantly protest their innocence; but their interesting theatricals, it is needless to say, were of no avail, and, alternately cursing and threatening, they were marched off to the station.

On Requin we found a purse containing two hundred francs, which I took for granted was Monsieur Jean's, and the diamond stud belonging to M. Lemaire. On his companion, who gave the name of Sydney Autour, we found the ring of M. Montague.

A few moments later a messenger whom I had dispatched to the house at the Barriere de Boule entered the apartment, bearing a large valise. At sight of this Requin grew almost frantic with rage, while Autour, evidently accepting the situation, looked silently and sullenly on. The valise was filled nearly to overflowing with valuables of every description—the princely harvest of adroit thievery. Among them I found a paper containing three hundred and seventy francs—the remainder of M. Lapin's collection that morning—and the accordion which Requin had purchased. This dulcet instrument I immediately sent back to the vender, with a demand of the return of the money paid therefor.

Fully satisfied with the result of my labors, I made my way to the office, where I found M. Lapin pacing up and down the apartment in a state of mingled impatience and distress. But a short while after his "country" friend left him, he had ascertained that the five-hundred-franc note was a counterfeit beyond peradventure; and like an uneasy ghost, he had haunted the office the whole day awaiting my return, and driving every one he met almost frantic with a thousand-and-one questions as to the chances of apprehending the rogue who had swindled him so cleverly.

I had scarcely crossed the threshold than he assailed me with a perfect volley of interrogatories.

I worried him a little, and then gave him the comfort he needed.

"Here is your purse; you have lost ten francs of the money, which your friend probably spent in drinking your health."

"May Satan fly away with him!"

"And here are your four hundred and thirty-five francs," I continued.

"*Parbleu!* Is it possible!"

"Now if you would like to see your friend, I will show him to you."

"Where is he?"

"Behind the bars."

"*Bon!* May he never get out!"

"We shall want you in court, and no doubt he will have lodgings at Toulon for the next few years."

"You do things up clever here, monsieur," said Lapin, in a tone of admiration.

"In the future I advise you not to trust everybody you meet," I smiled.

"I have learned a lesson, monsieur," he rejoined, emphatically.

After a laughable scene in court, Messieurs Requin and Autour were fully committed, and in due time sent to Toulon—thus ridding the city of two of the smartest rogues that ever "worked a game."

M. Montague was overjoyed at the recovery of his ring, and liberally fulfilled his promises. The diamond stud of M. Lemaire I returned in person, and the face of the shrewd old banker was a study as I related the manner in which the accomplished pickpocket had relieved him of the gem.

The next feature story to be issued in this magazine is a heart-gripping detective romance, written by one of the greatest criminal hunters in America. Be sure to get a copy and read it.

TAKE NOTICE!

The feature stories that have been published in this magazine are well worth reading, if you have not already seen them. The list is as follows:

No.
1 THE EEL MAN, by Robert Carlton Brown
2 ZITANA OF MAISON ROUGE, by F. W. Doughty
3 THE MYSTERIOUS WEB, by Armstrong Perry
4 UNDER THE HYPNOTIC SPELL, by Dr. H. Enton
5 THE SILKEN SHEATH, by Crittenden Marriott
6 A FORTUNE TELLER'S SECRET, by Gladys Hall
7 THE MYSTIC EMBLEM, by Marie Coolidge Rask
8 THE CARDS OF FATE, by William Goode
9 MR. BACHELLER'S APARTMENTS, By William Hamilton Osborne
10 THE INNER WHEEL, by Octavius Roy Cohen
11 THE VOICE OF THE VALLEY, by Robt. C. Brown
12 THE SIGN OF THE SEVEN SHARKS, By Charles F. Oursler
13 UNDER A MASK, by Critenden Marriott
14 CASE 4,444, by Gladys Hall
15 AFTER A MILLION, by Police Captain Howard
16 SHADOWING THE BLUE TRIANGLE, By Charles F. Oursler
17 THE CASE OF CAPTAIN FORTESQUE, by R. Ingalls
18 THE BIRD-HEADED SPHINX, by Edith S. Tupper
19 A DOUBLE MYSTERY, by Dr. Harry Enton
20 THE MAGICIAN DETECTIVE, by C. F. Oursler
21 KING COBRA MYSTERY, by George Gilbert
22 THE HAUNTED CORRIDORS, by Wm. H. Osborne
23 NO MAN'S MAN, by Maxwell Smith
24 THE TREVOR PUZZLE, by T. C. Harbaugh.
25 THE TRAIL OF ROSES, by Edmund Condon.
26 THE HINDOO VANISHING CLUE, By Pauline Carrington Bouve
27 WHO WAS GUILTY? by Beulah Poynter
28 THE EVIL EYE, by Chas. F. Oursler
29 THE THIRTEENTH DOOR, by Edith Sessions Tupper
30 THE GAME OF DETECTIVE CAREW, By Leonard Jerome
31 LAW-MAKER AND LAW-BREAKER, By Beulah Poynter
32 THE COUNTERFEIT HEIRESS, By Inspector John Harrigan
33 TRACKED TO CHINA, by Chief Roger O'Brien
34 AFTER THE GERMAN SPIES, by May Halsey Miller
35 THE CLUE IN THE BOX, by Alexander Douglas

If you cannot procure any of the numbers you want from your newsdealer, send us the price, ten cents, in money or postage stamps, and we will mail them to you postage free. Address

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher. 168 West 23d St., New York.

AN EMBEZZLER'S REVENGE

By MARTHA HATFIELD PRICE

IT was ten o'clock on Tuesday morning. I had already been at the office a couple of hours, hard at work auditing ledgers and day-books. They had been my constant companions for many days past. I was beginning to tire of their company. But at last I had discovered that of which I was in search.

I whistled down my speaking-tube for Mr. Jenkins, the head-clerk of the firm.

"Has Mr. Macfarlane come yet?"

"No, sir," was the reply.

I felt annoyed. He ought to have arrived half an hour ago. Was it possible he had taken fright? I gave orders that he should be sent to me directly he came.

I had been engaged on an important affair, but I believed I had carried it through successfully. So far as I knew my examination of the books had been made without exciting suspicion, but it was difficult to be quite sure.

Half an hour passed before Macfarlane made his appearance. When he entered the room it was evident he thought he was about to be reprimanded for his tardy arrival, for he began to apologize. I listened to his excuses, which I happened to know were pure inventions, and then turned to the matter in hand.

"Can you explain these figures?" I asked him quietly, opening the ledger at a certain page. He gave a slight start, and then moved slowly forward to inspect the entry.

"What is it that requires explanation?" he asked.

"According to the returns which I have received from Frodsham & Walker," I replied, "the amount of alloy in their last consignment does not tally with that stated in your entry. Moreover, they do not seem to have been allowed the usual discount, though you have deducted it from the sums for which you have accounted."

The evidence was as clear as day. He could give no explanation.

"It must have been a mistake," he said. "We used not to allow the discount, and I suppose I must have overlooked the recent change in my instructions."

"It's a curious mistake," I observed. "It has occurred in the only case in which, in the ordinary course of business, we should have no check on your transactions. Pure accident rendered me suspicious, and I resolved to see if there were any ground for my suspicions."

He made no reply.

"Have you anything to say?" I demanded.

"Only that it is a mistake," he reiterated.

"I am afraid that excuse will scarcely be sufficient. A mistake which results in a loss to the firm of eight hundred and seventy-five dollars is not one that can be passed over."

"What do you mean to do?" he asked.

"Naturally, I shall put the whole affair before my partners. In the meantime you will remain here till they decide what steps to take."

He moved a step toward the door, but I had my hand on the bell, and he stopped.

"I have told you it was a mistake," he repeated, "but I am ready to suffer the consequences of it. It will ruin me to replace the money, but I can give you half of it, and you can retain the balance by degrees from my salary."

"That is not the usual method in which embezzlement is treated," I replied coldly.

"Do you mean that you will prosecute me?"

"I have no doubt whatever that the firm will."

"It's no good putting it on the firm," he said angrily. "It is you who have discovered it all. No one will know a word of it if you do not speak."

"You confess it, then?" I asked.

"I confess to nothing except a mistake. It is for you to undertake the responsibility of treating it as anything more. Are you going to ruin me? Don't you know that if I am arrested my life is wrecked?"

I hesitated. It is a serious thing to blast a man's prospects forever, however he may deserve punishment. He saw my hesitation, and took advantage of it.

"Why do you want to injure me? What good will it do you? You know I am the best man in the whole place. Is it wise to lose me? I will work as hard as a dozen of them if you will let me off. You will always have a hold over me in future, and if you see me shirking you will always be able to keep me up to my work. If only you will keep silent! No one else knows."

His argument was the worst he could have used; it determined me finally. I saw that if I consented to hold my tongue I should be as much at his mercy as he at mine—we should be accomplices.

"It is too late," I said. "You should have thought of all this before. I have no choice. I shall report what I have discovered."

"Very well, then," he said in a whisper, "if you do, I swear I'll have my revenge! Another couple of years and I should make my fortune; now you are destroying everything. Take care!"

"I am not to be hindered from doing my duty by idle threats," I retorted as I rose.

"You will find they are not idle," he returned. "I'll make you repent this day, if I have to wait half my life for it."

I disdained to hear more. I left the room, locking the door behind me. Macfarlane made no resistance; he knew escape was impossible. To reach the street he would have to traverse a room full of men, even supposing I could not have prevented him from leaving the room.

An hour afterward he was given into custody. When the trial came on there was no difficulty in proving his guilt; it also came out that he had squandered the money he had appropriated in dissipation, and that he was even a more worthless character than I had believed. I felt no compunction for the part I had played. I had only fulfilled my duty. Nor did I anticipate that his threats were anything more than the expressions of the hate which he naturally felt toward me.

He was condemned to two years' imprisonment with hard labor.

The two years passed swiftly by. I had nearly forgotten Macfarlane. The only result of the affair as regards me

had been that my partners conceived an exaggerated notion of my ability and tact, and reported greater confidence in me than before.

The firm of which I was a junior partner was an old-established one. Our business was that of manufacturing goldsmiths, and was a profitable one. However, trade was by no means so prosperous as it had been; in spite of unremitting efforts, the income of the firm gradually sank. Our only consolation was the knowledge that our rivals suffered even more than we did.

Personally, I spared no pains. I was not by nature a business-man, preferring the professions to manufactures, but circumstances having led me to embark in business, I determined to make the best of it at all events.

Naturally, I was dissatisfied with the recent course of things, and cast my eyes arround in every direction for a fresh field of activity. At the same time it behooved us to be careful; more than one firm had recently come to grief, driven into dangerous speculations by the necessity of doing something.

I was in a Broadway restaurant one day, taking a hasty lunch on my return from a journey to Buffalo, when I was conscious of some one looking at me. I turned around and faced a man who seemed familiar to me. A moment's reflection and I recognized him—Macfarlane.

He hesitated a moment, and then lifted his hat to me. Almost unconsciously I gave him a sign of recognition. He at once came forward.

"How do you do, sir?" he asked. "I was afraid you would not care to recognize me."

"I am scarcely sure I do," was my reply. I wanted to let him see that I was not anxious to renew our acquaintance. At the same time the meeting had taken me so by surprise that I had not made up my mind to cut him dead.

"You've every excuse for not recognizing me," he said. "My face is a little altered, isn't it?"

It certainly was. He wore a beard and mustache instead of being clean-shaved. His hair was differently arranged, his whole dress and appearance were quieter and more gentlemanly than formerly. He had immensely improved in every respect.

"It is some time since we met," he continued.

"Yes, I suppose it is," I replied, wishing he had avoided the topic, for I felt very uncomfortable.

"It is nearly four years," he said. "Four years make a good deal of difference to a man, especially when two of them have been spent in prison."

What could I say? It would have been insulting, even cruel, to say that I was sorry.

"You don't mind talking to a jail-bird, I hope," he said with a smile. "You need not be afraid of being recognized; no one but you has recognized me, yet I don't think you would have done so if I hadn't fixed my eyes on you."

"I should have thought that it would have been you who would have been the first to object to our meeting," I said. "The sign of me can't be very pleasant to you, I'm afraid."

He almost laughed.

"You're mistaken, I'm glad to say," he replied. "My one hope lately has been to meet you. We can't talk quietly here," he added; "there is such a crew. Could you spare me half an hour? I think I can promise you won't regret it."

I wanted to get back to my work, but Macfarlane interested me. I had been severe, perhaps, with him in the old days. I might, at all events, grant him the small favor of an interview now. We took a taxicab to his hotel —a quiet one in a street off Madison Square. He had a private room, and he ordered up some coffee. Evidently he was in different circumstances than when a junior-clerk and traveler in our firm.

"Try one of these," he said.

He produced some cigars. I took one; it was in the green condition that many Frenchmen love.

"Not dry enough for you?" he asked.

"It will suit me admirably," I replied. "Didn't you get these in France?"

"Yes; I only crossed a week ago. I've been there for the last two years or so—ever since—you know what."

"I am glad to see that you have not been so utterly ruined as you anticipated," I said, conscious that the remark was in bad taste. But I was in a false position, and everything I said must be either stupid or awkward.

"Do you remember," he asked, "the day when you had me in your room?"

I remembered it as well as he.

"Do you remember what I said when you wouldn't let me off?"

I nodded. Was he going to spring some mine on me? Was all this a preparation for a deadly revenge? Impossible. He was as harmless-looking a companion as one could wish for.

"I said that I'd be revenged on you if I had to wait years. Well, I have waited years, and here is my revenge. I'm treating you to coffee and cigars, and talking away to you just as if I were the senior partner, and you the clerk. That's a better revenge than trying to put a bullet into you, and then getting hanged for it, isn't it? Upon my word though, sir, when I made that threat I meant doing you a mischief, if ever I got the chance."

"I am very glad you have thought better of it," I remarked truthfully enough.

"So am I," he said. "So far from wanting to serve you out for the part you took in that wretched business, I am thankful to the last degree for what you did. I was on the way to ruin when you stopped me; you cut me adrift from all my old temptations and evil companions, and when I left prison I was free in more senses than one. I went to Paris, and there I got on. You know I have a certain sort of talent—even you must acknowledge that?"

"I know you were the best man in the place," I said, "and we were sorry to lose your services."

"I think it was fortunate for you that you did," he said with a laugh, "or in a few years I should have appropriated a good portion of your profits. I saw where the chances lay. However, I've lately been turning my energies into a more legitimate channel, and find it pays better, as well as being more comfortable to my conscience. I've no longer a constant dread of a policeman, and can look every man in the face."

We continued talking some time longer; he was an amusing companion, and regaled me with the most entertaining stories of his life in Europe. At last my business compelled me to leave him, so I rose and excused my unwilling departure.

He held out his hand as I went, and I shook it. I did so with considerable satisfaction. I felt an immense relief in finding that the man whom I feared I had irreparably injured had become a changed character, and had actually profited through the very experience that might have been expected to ruin him.

"I'm glad you'll shake hands with me," he said warmly; "it shows that you, at all events, no longer despise me."

"Every one must respect a man who has done as you have," I said.

"I'm afraid not. At all events, I don't mean to risk it. If you should happen ever to talk of me to any one at your

place, I wish you would not mention that you have seen me."

"I am sure no one would wish to rake up the past," I said.

"Perhaps not, but I don't want any one to be reminded of it. I don't object to your speaking about it, but no one else shall. I've even changed my name; here is my card."

I took it—Mr. Charles Farebrother.

"If I can be of any assistance to you I hope you will say so," I remarked, as I put on my hat. "I should be glad of an opportunity of making you forget, as far as possible, that we once were on bad terms."

"You are very good; I should scarcely have ventured to ask you to do me a favor. You are in a hurry now, I see; will you honor me by dining with me some night this week? I should very much like a talk with you; perhaps it might result in advantage to both of us."

I consented, partly through curiosity. A few minutes afterward I was on my way to the office.

I was careful not to mention that I had seen Macfarlane; his wishes were entitled to respect.

At the appointed hour I met him at his hotel. He gave me an admirable little dinner, and supplemented it with some of his choice cigars. Not a word did he say which could have reference to our past connection; he was simply an agreeable host.

I was curious to learn how it was he had changed so marvelously in his circumstances, but he seemed in no hurry to enlighten me. However, as we sat chatting after dessert, he gradually led the talk up to the reason of his invitation.

To condense his story, it appeared that on leaving prison he managed to scrape together two hundred and fifty dollars. He obtained employment in a small jeweler's store or shop, but soon managed to find a better situation. Instrumental in saving the place from a burglary, he was handsomely rewarded—a timely investment of his gift turned out successfully, and he found himself in possession of ten thousand dollars.

All this time he had been on the lookout, and he thought he saw an opening for making money.

The knowledge which he had acquired as traveler for our firm showed him that the goldsmith's art was not in a high state of perfection in America, especially in the Western States. He conceived the idea of buying the raw material and sending it across to England for manufacture—the smaller cost and greater finish of workmanship in that country amply repaying the comparatively small charges for freight and duty.

The business out West prospered; he took two partners, who brought considerable capital into the firm, and he was now the head of a flourishing concern.

Of course, all this was intensely interesting to me. There was evidently a field for further enterprise, of which I knew but little. I had made inquiries about the Western market, but had failed to secure an opening.

"I'm here about it now," said Macfarlane, "and one of my partners, Richardson, will be East next week. Now, what we want to find is a firm who will do the manufacturing for us at fixed and moderate rates—a firm we can trust for good workmanship, and so save the cost of a London agent and place of business. Richardson recommended Jackson's, but they have served us rather badly and we have come East to make fresh arrangements."

If our firm could only get hold of such a splendid job it would go far to revive our sinking prosperity. My business energy got the upper hand of me and I dropped a hint that possibly we might come to some arrangement.

"I confess that is just what I should like," he said, "but I was afraid to propose it. You are not likely to want to do business with me, considering what has happened in the past."

I did not know what to say, so I kept silent.

"However, you would keep your eyes open this time, no doubt," he continued with a laugh. "Seriously, though, nothing would please me more than to have you as our manufacturers; I know your style of work, and I am sure you would treat us generously. Only I must insist on one thing, should we come to any understanding. There are to be no running accounts between us; we pay on the nail for all work done, not in bills or checks, but in cash. Unless you consent to that proviso I decline to carry the matter a step further."

I protested against his want of belief in my change of convictions regarding him. But he was firm; he would not feel comfortable unless he put all possibility of doubt on our part out of the question.

After all, the advantage was on my side.

The upshot of it was that it appeared there was an immediate demand for certain work—a demand so pressing that there was no time to manufacture to meet it; it must be supplied from stock. This, of course, was agreed to. Raw gold was to be supplied at varying intervals to be made up as directed, and when the metal was not forthcoming orders were to be executed in the usual manner from metal in stock.

About 11 o'clock we sallied forth together. He offered to walk with me part of the way. Happening to pass a bar, he said he would show me what Western drinks were like. We had two or three, for which he paid.

We then had a taxicab to the Grand Central, from which station I had to start for home. He wanted some fresh air, so came with me to walk back to Central Park. He insisted on paying for everything that evening, so produced a $50 note for the fare, having no change left.

Naturally, the chauffeur had none. Macfarlane would not hear of my paying, but consented to my changing his bank-note for him.

I made an appointment with him for the next day, and returned home immensely pleased with my evening's work. If things went well it meant a clear profit of many thouhands a year to the firm. When I was in bed, however, an unpleasant idea came into my head. Was it possible? But no! I dismissed the thought, which, however, would not be dismissed finally. Was the note I had changed for Macfarlane a good one?

I had heard of tricks of a similar kind often enough. Macfarlane had not made a bad thing out of me if he had palmed off a bogus note in exchange for my cash. I got out of bed and examined it carefully. It appeared all right. I was ashamed of myself for doubting him. Nevertheless, I went to the bank next day and had it examined. It was pronounced genuine. Judge how ashamed I felt! What, then, were my feelings when I caught sight of Macfarlane standing at the counter not two yards from me, filling a stout pocketbook with bank-notes.

I tried to slip out unobserved, fearful lest he had seen the transaction I had been engaged in. But he happened to look up and caught sight of me. My only consolation was the hope that he had not seen the business upon which I had been engaged. I responded to his greeting and we walked away together.

He had received a cablegram that morning from England, to the effect that his partner had started for America. So it was too late to instruct him to bring the gold with him. For the present Macfarlane would be obliged to give his orders to us to be executed from our own stock.

Fortunately, he observed, his capital was large enough to enable him to do so.

The one point on which he insisted, which I thought unnecessary, if not foolish, was that no mention of his former name should be made to my partners. It was a moot point with me for some time whether I had any right to embark in transactions with him without informing the members of my firm of all I knew, but the security was so good and the transactions so profitable that I yielded to his condition.

In the course of the next few weeks we executed a valuable series of orders for him. He always paid me himself on the delivery of the goods. The payment was invariably in bank-notes or gold. Only once did he offer me a check. I took it, and it was honored without question. His partner arrived in the course of ten days or so, and Macfarlane introduced me, apologizing first for the want of refinement observable in him.

"He's a rough diamond, a self-made man. But he has money and honesty and knows his business," he said.

As I had scarcely any transactions with him personally I could not object to his appearance and manners; but I should have put him down as a scoundrel had not Macfarlane given him so good a character.

Business became even more brisk between Macfarlane and our firm. At the end of a fortnight the former showed me a large consignment of metal which he had just received. He promised to send it to us next morning. The same day we took for the second time a check from him. The reason of his offering it was that he had been obliged to pay on the spot for duties, etc., of the gold. I received it without a misgiving.

"I wish you'd come and spend a quiet evening with me and a few others," he said as he handed me the check. "I have been making some arrangements which I think may open up a new field for both of us. Will you come?"

I assented. He gave me an address—a new one. He warned me that it was not a swell affair, that the men I should meet were of the type of Richardson.

Having plenty of time on my hands I walked to the rendezvous at the time appointed, but was overtaken by Macfarlane a few yards from the door.

"I'm rather late," he said. "I've had a little business to see to. Come along."

He took my arm and led the way, "by a short-cut," as he said, to a house in a street not far from Sheridan Square. A latch-key gave him admittance to a passage at the end of which we clambered.

"Brutal hole this is," he explained, "but it contains more money than you would believe. Here we are."

He pushed open a door and ushered me into a large room, almost bare of furniture and half filled with tobacco smoke. Macfarlane was greeted with words from most of the men, some of whom did not appear to me to be very well disposed toward him.

"You're late," said one, with an oath.

"Yes, I know," was the answer. "Richardson, you know this gentleman, I believe. Will you introduce him?"

"Why don't you do it yourself?" was his reply.

"I want to look at some samples from the next room," said Macfarlane. "I shall be back in half a minute."

He slid out of the room, leaving me rather uneasy. The company was an ill-looking one. Even making allowance for the fact that they were miners, perhaps, and self-made men, their appearance was unprepossessing.

"This is the gentleman that helps to distribute," said Richardson to the company generally.

"I wonder how much sticks to him?" said one speaker.

"Not so much as to that fellow in the next room," muttered another, with a glance toward the door out of which Macfarlane had departed.

A vague fear fell on me. What did these strange remarks mean?

"I don't quite understand you," I said to Richardson. "Mr. Farebrother asked me to meet you to-night on a matter of business."

"Exactly, and the sooner we get to work the better. How much have you to account for?"

One thing was plain by this time—that I had been deceived. I was in a net of hornets, and I doubted if I could escape without being stung.

"If you will wait till Mr. Farebrother comes back he will, no doubt, explain why I have come here," I said as quietly as I could. "I am at a loss to understand to what you refer."

"No, no," said a tall, cadaverous man, eyeing me suspiciously. "We should like a settlement of this job without Farebrother's putting his oar in it. The less we see of him the better till we have done with you. How much did you get for that last packet of flimsies?"

The word was a revelation. I knew it was used to denote forged bank-notes. Like a flash the whole thing became clear. I had been skillfully trapped into being an accomplice of forgers. My friend Macfarlane, instead of being a reformed character, was the rascal he always had been. He had kept his word. This had been his revenge."

Fortunately I did not lose my head. I could see that I was among a desperate set of men. If countenances told anything they were an unmitigated lot of scoundrels. Should I cross them I would repent it. I resolved that the safest thing to do was to pretend that I was the accomplice they supposed me; then, when I was safely out of their hands, the police should soon be on their track. I temporized. I said that Macfarlane—known to them as Farebrother—had the accounts of what I had received. I would step into the next room and ask him for them. This was prevented by a man locking the door and swearing that I should not leave the room until their demands were satisfied.

I listened patiently to the confused uproar of voices. As far as I could gather, Macfarlane, who seemed the chief of the counterfeiters, had taken considerable quantities of notes, stating that a friend of his was passing them very successfully. After some time had elapsed and he had produced very small amounts for distribution pressure was put on him and he promised that his agent should come and himself clear up the balance due. I was the agent, and now they demanded, in no measured terms, sums amounting to several thousand dollars.

I explained that Macfarlane had deceived them; that I had never received the sums. I was rudely searched and several notes and Macfarlane's check were found on me. The threats became more violent. I began to fear for my safety, when there was a sudden hush. Steps were heard on the stairs; the door was rudely shaken and then burst in, and a file of police marched into the room.

Never had I seen a policeman with such gratitude. I leaped toward them for protection. I was only just in time. There was a loud report and I felt a bullet whiz past my ear. I almost suffered the reward of a traitor, for the gang evidently thought that I had betrayed them.

So agitated and overcome was I that it was some time before I realized that I, too, was a prisoner. However, it was so; but I had no anxiety on that score; explanation would be sufficient to restore me to liberty. I yielded without a protest, thankful enough to find myself under the careful guard of the stern policemen.

Little did I think then of what was about to happen to me. I had not reckoned on the calculating villainy of my old enemy. He had so entangled me in his transactions, so carefully put on me personally the responsibilities of his nefarious transactions, that when I heard the District Attorney unfold the evidence against me as an accomplice I was horror-struck. I was a known companion of Macfarlane. I had concealed his identity with an embezzler. I had passed numerous counterfeit bank-notes, taking advantage of my secure business reputation. I had even acknowledged to the gang that I had been a partner in their swindling transactions.

Worst of all, Macfarlane was free. He had given information to the authorities of the meeting of the forgers, and then quietly absconded, whither no one knew. I furnished every particular about him, but all attempts to track him failed.

Now that his scheme of revenge and profit had succeeded it was easy for me to see how it had been accomplished, and to wonder at my own blindness in never suspecting that I was being made a victim. Having once put me off my guard by professing his gratitude for my prosecution of him, he gave me the $50 note to change, with the idea of my making it a test of his honesty. He was waiting for me at the bank the next morning with his pocketbook open to display the magnitude of his transactions. He came to my firm because we could supply him with easily convertible goods which, when melted, could not be traced. The gold he showed me was bogus. The check he gave me on the morning of my arrest was dishonored. Everything was managed to get as much as possible out of me first, and then involve me in ruin. I had almost resigned myself to being found guilty. Judge then of my joy when my lawyer brought me the news one morning of the capture of Macfarlane. It had been effected in the most unexpected way. So far as we knew, all the members of the gang had assembled on that memorable night. There was, however, one exception—a man named Barker was delayed. He arrived at the house an hour or two late, thought that things looked strange, and found the police in possession.

He naturally withdrew. He heard full details of the capture, and then went to find Macfarlane, who owed him personally a considerable sum. Macfarlane was not to be found. But Barker persevered; tracked him at last, and demanded his money. Macfarlane refused it; Barker went the same day to inform the authorities of Macfarlane's whereabouts, offering to turn State's evidence, an offer that was accepted.

The result of the evidence that he produced was that the jury inclined to the belief that I had been a victim and I was adjudged not guilty. But though I left the court proclaimed to be an innocent man, none the less was I aware that Macfarlane had kept to the letter the vow he made to be revenged on me.

A story of absorbing interest, entitled "The Silent Witness," will figure in our next edition. It is one of those sketches that hold your interest very strongly from beginning to end.

REMEMBERED A VOICE AFTER FORTY YEARS

FORMER-MAYOR THURSTON, of Cambridge, Mass., attracted by a bell-like voice, stopped a minute to listen to the conversation of an aged man and a Harvard student of nineteen.

"Isn't your name Lyon?" the ex-mayor asked the old gentleman.

"It surely is," answered the party addressed.

"I heard you read forty years ago, and although I have never heard your voice since, I recognized it immediately," volunteered the former mayor.

"Yes, I am Col. George A. Lyon, whom the papers call the seventy-year-old Harvard student. I did quite a bit of reading when I was in college. You know I had to work my way through. Come up to my rooms in Stoughton some time. You will always find the latch up, a good crowd there, a cup of tea or coffee and a good-sized bowl of crackers," replied Lyon.

"I surely will," declared former-Mayor Thurston, as he walked away, busy with his memories; for the time he spoke of was his courting-days, and she was at his side when Colonel Lyon recited a rather appealing poem of love and romance.

EXPLORER FINDS PIGMY TRIBE

CAPT. CECIL G. RAWLING, the explorer, has recently given English scientists some interesting accounts of a new tribe of pygmies, found by his expedition in southwest Dutch New Guinea.

These little people, known as the Tapiros, average four feet eight and three-quarters inches in height. They were found living in the low-lying hills of the Kapare River. On the approach of the white men they ran away, but the expedition succeeded in capturing three, whose curiosity brought them near camp. At first they were greatly frightened, but kindness won them over and a few months later the explorers were enabled to establish trading relations with the tribe and were allowed to visit and stay in their village of Wombirmi. This village is hidden away in the forest high up the mountainside, and was only found after many fruitless attempts. While no open hostility was shown to the whites, they were not exactly received with open arms. Of the women and children they saw nothing, but their shrill cries could be heard as they fled up the mountainside on the approach of a stranger.

Describing the men, Captain Rawling says, taken as a whole, that they are well made and wiry, while their color is a dark chocolate. The hair, usually black, but sometimes with a touch of brown or even red, is worn short. Many grow beards, the older men dyeing theirs red. Like all native tribes, they wear necklets of animal bones and other small possessions. Their only clothing consists of a covering around the loins.

"Their houses and surroundings," says Captain Rawling, "are considerably in advance of those of their large-framed brethren of the plains. To the list of Negritos, which with the Negrillos are the known tribes of pygmies inhabiting the earth, must now be added the newly-discovered tribe of Tapiros, who, so far as their stature is concerned, take rank next above the Kongo pygmies."

THE MYSTERIOUS FORGERY

BY A BANK DETECTIVE.

IT was a bleak October morning when Walter Crump, cashier of Messrs. Livesey & Mason, quickened his pace as he made his way to the scene of his daily toil. It was not that he feared to be late that Mr. Crump was walking fast. During all the forty years that he had sat upon a high stool from nine to five Mr. Crump had never been known to be late for his work. A more methodical, careful man never hung over a ledger or balanced a cash-book.

At length he reached the well-known staircase, opened the office door and stood still for a moment in surprise. Young Carter, the assistant bookkeeper, was there before him, already at his work. Mr. Crump smiled grimly.

"So you've made a good beginning, young man," he said. "Well, we'll see."

Carter's face flushed a little as he bade the older man good-morning. Crump, who had married rather late in life, had a bright-eyed daughter named Annie, with whom Robert Carter had fallen very much in love. It was only on the preceding evening that things had come to a crisis, and, somewhat to the young man's surprise, Crump had rejected the proposed engagement. He did not like Carter. He did not approve of the young fellow's fashionably cut clothes, nor of his scarf-pin, nor of his cane. Such things, Mr. Crump considered, were the signs of a frivolous disposition and unsteady habits. Nor did Crump approve of the snatches of comic songs which Carter was continually humming. He suspected that the young man frequented cabarets and spent more money on cheap cigars, novels and outings than was proper for one in his position. Besides, Robert Carter was usually the last of all the clerks to make his appearance in the morning, and this was, in Crump's eyes, a very bad sign. It was plain to the old man that Carter was now making an attempt to earn his good opinion.

"Time will show! Time will show!" said Crump in rather an aggravating way as he changed his coat, opened his desk, unlocked his safe and set about his work. Soon the other clerks began to arrive, and then came Mr. Mason, the acting partner, a tall, pale man with long, black whiskers. Mr. Livesey, the senior partner, only came to the office twice a week to examine the bank books and see how things were going on. Mr. Mason opened his letters and soon appeared at Crump's desk with a small sheaf of them in his hand. These were letters in response to which small sums of money had to be sent, and it belonged to Crump to attend to them, for he had authority to sign checks for the firm for sums up to twenty-five dollars.

Crump first made a list of the payments he had to make, and then went to the safe for his check-book. As he opened it to write the first check he was surprised to find that the counterfoil belonging to the last check which had been taken from the book was not filled up, the counterfoil with particulars of the amount, the date and the person to whom the check was sent. But his surprise changed to dismay when he took out his cash-book and found that he had only drawn nine checks the day before, the counterfoils of which were all properly filled up, whereas a tenth check had been torn out of the book.

For a moment he sat as if stunned. Could any one have stolen the blank check? He always kept the key of the safe on his own bunch; but it was just possible that some one might have got hold of the key, taken an impression of it in wax and had a false key made. He had heard of such things. He leaned his head on his hands and tried to think. When had he closed the safe last night? About four in the afternoon, before any one had left the office for the day; for he remembered that he had been sent to the docks about four o'clock with some documents for a ship that was about to sail, and that when he got back at 6:30 everybody had left and the place was in darkness.

If the blank check had been stolen the theft must have been committed last night—or this morning. Could the safe have been opened before his arrival? He remembered Carter's unusually early appearance, and threw a suspicious glance at the young man.

Then a simpler solution of the matter occurred to him. It was very possible that, in tearing out the last check he had drawn the day before, he had torn out two by mistake, folded them up and sent them off together. This would, of course, account for the appearance of the check-book. He determined to write at once to Marshall & Co., merchants in Boston, to whom he had sent his last check, and ask whether a blank check had not been sent to them by mistake.

The next day was Tuesday, and, according to his invariable custom on that day of the week, Mr. Livesey made his appearance in the office. Business had not long commenced when everybody in the establishment was aware that something unusual had happened. Mr. Mason was closeted with his partner for a few minutes and then went hurriedly out of the office, returning shortly afterward with Mr. Jeffreys, the manager of the East Side bank at which the firm kept their account. Jeffreys left, and came back accompanied by one of his cashiers. Then a bell was rung and Crump was sent for. With a hard beating heart and a cold sweat on his brow the cashier obeyed the summons.

"Bring your check-book, Mr. Crump," said the senior partner.

This was done, and a tall man, whom Crump had not noticed up to that time, stepped up to the table and glanced at the check-book along with Mr. Livesey.

"I thought so," exclaimed the old gentleman. "Here's the place from which the check was taken; here is the counterfoil. The numbers correspond. What made you do it, Crump? You are the last man in the world from whom I would have expected such conduct."

"Do what, sir?" faintly uttered Crump.

"Do what?" echoed his employer with a contemptuous smile. "Who did you get to do this little bit of work for you?"

As he spoke Mr. Livesey tossed a check across the table. Crump took it up and read:

"The East Side Bank.—Pay Jos. Beckman, Esq., or order, fifteen thousand eight hundred and seventy-two dollars.

"LIVESEY & MASON."

He looked up bewildered. The tall man in the frock coat watched him narrowly.

"Who is this Beckman?" asked Mr. Livesey.

"I don't know, sir."

"You don't know? You see that the check has come from your book?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you give it to any one?"

"No, sir."

"Did you miss it?"

"Yes, sir; I missed it yesterday; and I wrote to Messrs. Marshall & Co., to whom I had sent the one before that, thinking that I had torn out two by mistake."

"That rather points to his innocence," whispered Mr. Livesey to the tall man at his elbow.

"It may be only a clever plant, sir," returned the other.

"You did not put that letter among the others to be copied in the letter-book?" put in Mr. Mason.

Crump hung his head.

"Is the check——" he began after a pause.

"Of course it is forged," answered Mr. Livesey.

"And was paid?"

"Yes; it was paid yesterday."

Crump shuddered, took a long breath and waited.

"Now, Crump, you had better make a clean breast of it," said Mr. Livesey after a few moments' silence. "Tell us who this man Beckman is; tell us where the money is gone—it can't all be spent already—and it will be none the worse for you."

Crump felt a choking sensation in his throat; but he plucked up courage enough to say: "I have told you already, sir, that I know nothing about it. It was only yesterday morning that I noticed that a check had been taken from the book."

"Why did you not mention it?" asked Mr. Mason.

"I thought I had torn it out myself along with the one I sent to Mr. Marshall."

"But it may have been torn out by some one in the office during the day before?"

"Yes, sir," replied Crump. "I don't see how any one could have got at the book, for I am very careful, but it is possible."

"The thief has probably got a professional forger to copy the signature from an old letter," said Mr. Mason, taking up the slip of paper. "It is beautifully imitated. I would not have detected it myself."

"It is plain that the thief must have been some one in the office, though probably he had an accomplice outside," said Mr. Jeffreys. "A stranger would not have known that the firm had so large a balance at the moment. Is there any one of your fellow-clerks whom you think may have had a hand in it?" he added, turning to the cashier.

"No, sir."

"Is there any one who keeps loose company or any one who is in the habit of spending too much money?"

"I have sometimes thought that Mr. Carter spent a good deal on clothing, and so on; but not more than many young men," replied Crump.

Crump was sent back to his desk and Carter sent for. He came back to the clerks' room in a state of great indignation, having strenuously denied any knowledge whatever of the forgery. The result of a consultation between the bank manager and the partners was that, as Crump could not account for the loss of the check, he had probably stolen it, and that, although there wasn't evidence enough to prosecute him, he must be dismissed. As to Carter, they determined to let him remain where he was and keep a close watch on his proceedings.

Crump went home that day like one in a dream. He was dismissed as the accomplice of a forger! And he could not say that, in the circumstances, he had been treated unjustly. The check had been entrusted to him and he had lost it. It was, apparently at least, his fault that the crime had been committed. He almost wondered that he had not been sent to prison.

About eight o'clock in the evening a knock came to the old man's door. It was Robert Carter. Crump started to his feet in indignation. Was this fellow, whom he suspected to be the real criminal, to come and gloat over him in his misery?

But before he could speak Carter had come into the room and held out his hand.

"I came to tell you, Mr. Crump," said he, "how sorry we all are in the office about this. None of us believe you had anything to do with it, of course. It will all come out likely in a day or two."

The old man stared at him for a minute or two without speaking and without taking Carter's hand.

"Begone, sir!" he cried at last. "How dare you come here to insult me with your sympathy? You! I fancy you are the one who knows most about it!"

Annie turned from one to the other with bewildered, terrified looks. Fortunately she was the only other one of the family in the room.

"What is it, father?" she cried, clasping her hands. "What is it you say Robert knows more about than any one else? Oh, tell me what has happened?"

"Go to your room, girl!" said her father sternly. "There is trouble enough without your meddling in it. Stop!" he continued as the girl slowly left the room. "You see that young man? I forbid you to see him, to write to him, to receive any letters from him. He—you will know soon enough."

"What, sir?" cried Carter, his eyes blazing with indignation. "Do you say that I—that I took the check? Why, it was an impossibility, even if I had wished to do such a thing."

"Leave my house, sir," was the old man's reply as he reseated himself in his chair.

Carter protested once more against the injustice of the cashier's suspicions, and then left the room.

At the street door he met Annie, who was waiting for him.

"Oh, Robert!" she exclaimed in a low voice, "tell me what has happened."

"Somebody at the office has forged a check for $15,872," he replied. "It had been taken from your father's book, and—and—he fancies I took it—I, who had nothing to do with his safe whatever."

"And do they imagine it was——"

Robert was silent.

"And you came here to say you didn't believe it? Oh, how good of you!"

"But he thinks I am the thief. You don't, I hope, Annie?"

"No, Robert. I am very sure of that. Only I can't see you so long as my father——"

Robert's only answer to this was a sigh, and with a hurried good-by the lovers parted.

Weeks and months went by, and the mystery of the forged check remained unsolved. Mr. Livesey insisted that the firm should bear the loss, which Mr. Mason thought the bank ought to repay, as they were legally responsible for the money.

"No," said the old gentleman, "they may be legally responsible, but I don't see that they ought to suffer. The check itself was in our hands and we allowed a thief to get hold of it. The bank did all they could. The forged

signature is so like yours that no one could tell the difference; and the bank cashier tells me that the man who cashed it showed him letters addressed to himself as 'Joseph Beckman' (the name on the check), and showed him his card, saying that he was a solicitor. Of course he wasn't. The thing has been most cleverly planned, and I am at a loss to think who put Crump up to it; but it seems to me we can't let the bank suffer. We could not afford to let it be known we had done so. No other bank would keep our account."

Crump could not find another situation, though he would have been glad to take the lowest place in an office. The wolf came to his door in earnest. Annie, who had a situation in a public school, was the chief support of the family; and the girl was pale and thin from long hours and scanty meals.

It was about five months after the day when the cashier was dismissed in disgrace that Mr. Mason left his office at half-past one, his usual hour for going out to lunch. Half-past one was also the time when it was Robert Carter's turn to go out for half an hour, and Mr. Mason had hardly had time to reach the street when the young man left his desk, went into Mr. Mason's room, entered a small closet in which a wash-hand basin was fitted up, and proceeded to wash his hands. This was a high misdemeanor, especially as accommodation was provided for clerks in another part of the building, but Robert Carter preferred Mr. Mason's closet and always used it when he had a chance of doing so.

On this occasion, however, he had barely begun his ablutions when he heard the outer door of the office slam, and then he heard some one, whom he judged to be his employer, come into the room.

Fortunately the door of the closet was nearly closed, so that the young man was invisible to any one in the center of the room.

"He has only come back for his umbrella," said Robert to himself. "There is no need for my moving. If I keep quiet he will be gone in a minute. No! Some one else has come in with him. What shall I do?"

Mr. Mason had already closed the double doors which led from his room to the outer office, and Carter was screwing up his courage to the point of confessing his presence when the first words spoken by the stranger fell upon his ear and made him stand still as a stone.

"You can take your choice, as I said in my letter. Hand me over another thousand or I'll split. What's one seventy-two hundreds out of fifteen thousand eight seventy-two? I had all the risk, and you——"

"Silence—will you?" hissed Mason in an angry whisper. "I can't give you a thousand dollars, for I haven't got it. But I will give you half now and half next month. After that you can 'split' if you like, for you shall get no more out of me."

"Hand over the dough, then," said the other, after a pause, and then there was a slight rustle of bank-notes.

"You had better leave the country," said Mr. Mason in a low tone. "The bank cashier who cashed the check might meet you in the street."

"I'll take care of that," replied the stranger, and after a few more words had passed the two men left the office.

All this time Carter had been standing half paralyzed, first by fear of discovery and then by astonishment. But he understood this much: that this stranger was the man who had cashed the forged check under the name of Beckman; that Mr. Mason knew it, and, so far from denouncing him to the police, was giving him money to hold his tongue. Yes; and more than this, the stranger was threatening to "split" upon Mr. Mason!

What it could all mean Carter could not comprehend; but he saw one thing plainly enough. The important point was to find out who this man was and where he lived. In a moment Carter ran out of the room, seized his hat and rushed downstairs.

He was just in time. Mr. Mason was leaving the foot of the stairs, going up the street, while a well-dressed man, who had evidently just parted from him, was walking rapidly in the opposite direction. Carter followed the stranger to the Astor House and saw him take a taxicab. This suited Carter exactly. He went around to the rear of the vehicle and got up on the trunk rack. At a Yonkers restaurant the man whom he was following got out and stopped to refresh himself, while Carter waited patiently outside. At last he reappeared and Carter quietly followed him down Warburton avenue and into a dingy street in the neighborhood of the docks. Here the pretended solicitor stopped at a door, which he opened with a latch-key.

"Ah!" said Carter to himself, "I have you now!"

He waited a few moments and then knocked at the door. It was answered by a dirty, slip-slop girl.

"Does Mr. Williamson live here?" inquired the young man.

"No, he doesn't."

"Wasn't that Mr. Williamson who came in just now—Mr. Williamson of Syracuse?"

"No, it wasn't. That was our first-floor roomer, Mr. Cromer. You've made a mistake."

"So I have. Beg your pardon, I'm sure"—and Carter turned away.

He went straight to police headquarters and narrated his experiences. That night Mr. Livesey received a visit which caused him some surprise—and so did Mr. Cromer. No sooner was the latter gentleman in the hands of the police than he confessed the whole matter.

Mason had known Cromer, who was a scoundrel with a respectable appearance and a plausible manner, for some time, and had selected him to be his tool. He had sent Crump to the docks on the afternoon before the morning when the check was missed; he had come back to the office after the clerks were gone, had then opened Crump's safe with his own key and abstracted the blank check. This check he had himself filled up and signed with the firm's signature in the usual way, so there was little wonder that the cashier at the bank had paid it without suspicion. He had, no doubt, calculated that the bank would have to bear the loss, but as it was he had cheated Livesey out of $7,930, for, as he himself had but a half share in the business, only one-half had to come out of his own pocket.

Mason saved his partner the trouble of trying whether he could make him criminally responsible for what he had done; for, when the police went to look for him, he had disappeared. Probably he had seen Robert Carter following his accomplice, and, scenting danger, had saved himself while there was time.

It turned out afterward that he had been speculating largely on the Stock Exchange and was sorely in need of money to pay his losses. It was some consolation to Mr. Livesey to think that his dishonest partner had not profited much by his thefts.

As for Walter Crump, he was offered his old place, with an apology and a handsome present to boot, and he still keeps the books which he had so long under his care.

The color came back to Annie's cheeks and the light to her eyes, and it was not many weeks before she became the promised wife of the young man who discovered the secret of the mysterious forgery.

THE VEILED LADY

By VICTOR REED

I WAS seated in my own office, for I had become a private detective—whistling rather dolefully. I had lost a dear, good friend of mine, and business was uncommonly slack. Rain was coming down in torrents, splashing so hard upon the pavement that it had made little fountains, as it were, by the rebound; the gutters were like miniature mountain streams, and people as they hurried by seemed wet, weary and wretched.

"No use looking out there," I thought as I turned away. "The sight of that would give any one a fit of the blues—even if they had no affliction and a good account at the banker's. How dark it is, and not yet mid-day!"

I stirred the fire. It was not cold enough for one, but I had one made to look cheerful, and, leaning my head upon my arm and my arms upon the mantel-piece, whistled rather loudly to drive away depression, even as boys whistle in the dark to keep down fear.

How long I had been in this highly intellectual employment I do not know. I was startled by feeling a touch on my arm, and still more so when I turned and found that a tall lady, beautifully dressed, but so deeply veiled that I could not see her face—not even a feature of it—standing by my side.

"I beg your pardon, madam," I stammered. "I did not hear you knock."

"I did knock, and loudly; for no one was in the outer office to tell me if you were engaged or not. I thought at first you were out, but, hearing you whistle, I knocked

"The lady he married is the lady in whose cause I take such an interest."

"Strange! I do not quite understand. What would you have me do?"

"Watch Mr. Goldsworthy. I know that he slights his wife. I know that he has forced money from her—used fraud, I may say. But there is worse behind."

"Does Mrs. Goldsworthy know that you have come on this mission—I mean, is it at her desire?"

"Certainly—oh, most certainly! But for reasons I need hardly explain she wishes not to be mixed up in the matter at all. All communications you wish to make to her can be made through me."

"It is an affair of a delicate nature," I replied. "Give me a few minutes and I will think it over. Do you suspect the gentleman of any crime in particular? Your statement seems almost too general for any one to work on—that is, with any hope of success."

"No. Only the man seems unknown here, and—well, do you refuse the case? If so, I must go somewhere else."

This did not please me, for, as I have said, business was very bad. So after a few more questions, by which I discovered that the duties would only be to watch, I accepted the offer—the terms were liberal. The lady gave me a name and address to which I was to write at certain intervals. She also placed a sum of money—all in gold—in my hands, and then, refusing to answer more questions, rose hastily and left the offices.

"Yes," I replied, "but mind this—under such circumstances, and with such directions—I need only say I think the chances of success very slight."

"That matters not. There is money to go on with for some time."

"But I must have your name and address so as to communicate with you."

"True. Address 29 Windsor Terrace, Flatbush."

"The name?"

She paused for a moment and then said, while she fixed her eyes keenly on me:

"Mrs. Goldsworthy!"

In spite of myself I could not help looking up in amazement.

She laughed a short little laugh.

"Are you surprised?"

"No," I said, although I was very greatly surprised. "The name of the gentleman, if you please?"

"Mr. Julius Goldsworthy, my husband."

"Then you are——"

I was about to say what had happened with the other lady, but thought it better to keep the matter dark.

"Well! You were about to say——"

"Suspicious of your husband? That is all. I will have your instructions carried out, and shall report to you from time to time."

"Good-evening," was the curt reply, and she passed out of the room.

By this time my office-boy had returned, so, leaving him in charge of the office, I hurried home to think the matter over and lay out my plans.

Some time had passed, and I had discovered absolutely nothing beyond that Mr. Goldsworthy was said to be a very fast man, very lavish with his money, fond of his wine. That he betted heavily no one could doubt; and, also, there was a mystery about the man. Also, I learned that while mining in San Francisco he had been shot in the wrist, which deprived him of the use of his right hand, and that so badly that he had to employ a clerk to write his simplest notes.

I had also discovered that neither of the ladies lived at the addresses they had given me. This did not astonish me, but I found that to make any further inquiries would be useless, if not dangerous. I had almost determined to give up the case when I received the following note, short, but not polite:

"Come at once to No. 29 Windsor Terrace. A woman's wit has discovered more than you could. Ask for Mrs. Fairholt. You will be shown up to me at once. Be careful to be secret, and come as an ordinary visitor.

"EMILY G."

"I think I see through this," I muttered to myself as I dressed. "Woman's jealousy. Well, Mr. Goldsworthy is a dashing man, in spite of his maimed hand, and that can scarcely be seen. But if I find that this is only a case of jealousy between wife and mistress I shall throw it up. I do not like these matters."

I arrived at the house and was at once admitted by a sharp girl.

"Mr. Grant, I guess?" she said. "Well, she's engaged. You're late, that's what you are. She"—I suppose she meant her mistress—"said you were to go stealthily into the anteroom and listen. You know. He's there."

Never before had I received such instructions, and in amazement I carried them out. From the inner room came the voice of the lady who had called upon me as Mrs. Goldsworthy. She was talking loudly—he evidently trying to pacify her, and she answering indignantly. I peeped through the door, which had been most likely left open a little way for that purpose, and beheld a strange scene.

The room was richly furnished and the lady dressed superbly. Beautiful, indeed, she was; but her eyes flashed contempt and anger. He advanced toward her with outstretched hands and said:

"Adele, I love you!"

"You love me?" she cried as she shrank back with disgust. "Listen, Joseph Fairholt! Oh, you may start at that name. I know it does not sound pleasant in your ears. Heaven knows it should not do so in mine! I was a young girl when you went to Nevada."

"Why speak of those days?" he cried passionately. "I tell you they are all lies that you have heard about me."

"Tut! Do you think we American girls are to be so easily done? Stand back, or look to yourself, for I have a revolver, and there never was a man in all 'Frisco who could shoot better than I. Listen, or I will crush you as I would a copperhead snake!"

"You were always a devil, Adele," said the man, as he threw himself doggedly on a lounge. "Go on."

"Surely," I thought, "that man is the rich Mr. Julius Goldsworthy. But he moves his hands as well as any one. I saw him just now grasp that paper-knife in a way that, had it been a dagger, would have caused me to enter the room at once."

"I will go on. You went up Nebraska way some years ago. You had some money—how much I do not know; but a good sum it must have been, for you drank and gambled terribly. In spite of all I loved you, and secretly became your wife. My father, who held a goodish claim, would not have consented to our union if he had known of it; but he forgave us, and the worn-out gentleman, Joseph Fairholt, became a miner."

"No disgrace in that. Your father was the same."

"Yes—an honest, hard-working one. Once he had forgiven you he trusted all into your hands. What was the return? Directly a fortune was made you fled with it."

"I own it. I really could not stand the life," he yawned. "What more? What became of Silas, your father?"

"I prayed him to pursue and punish you. He refused, replying that he was not a trapper of skunks."

"Scarce complimentary to myself, and yet highly satisfactory to me. Well? He is now——"

"Dead!"

"Poor old boob! He was born, I believe, in the earth, and, of course, he has been put there, now that he is dead. What more?"

"First answer me what you have done?"

"I don't know why I should; but, in rough outlines, this is my story: I hated the life—had been used to the gay life of the city, and saw no beauty in a mountain. Necessity made me go to the mines. I saw you. You were pretty, but rough and not educated. By Jove, how you have improved! How did you manage that?"

"No matter. We American girls soon manage those kind of things. Go on, and, if you can, be truthful."

"Thank you; I will."

Although Mr. Goldsworthy spoke so calmly, I could clearly see that he was quickly losing his temper.

"I made tracks—bolted. The silver had been made over to me my your father."

"By forgery!"

"Have a care. I have been a desperate man, and may become one again."

"You have been a scoundrel, Joseph, and will ever be so. Be careful; I have you in my power."

"Well, I traveled, speculated, made money, became rich—and there the matter ends."

"No! There the matter does not end. How have you amassed this large fortune?"

"How have you amassed your large fortune? Eh, my lady? You seem to have made a lot of money."

"My father, with what your thieving had left him, took another claim, found silver and cinnabar, and—and I am richer than even you."

"The deuce you are! Well, I am glad to hear it, as you will not bother me. When a young fellow—a poor devil of a clerk—I had taken a great fancy to a young lady. She—well, she was above me, and, when I bolted, I mean left England—did not know of my passion. Egad! I do not think she even knew me. I am sure she never spoke to me. However, I was now rich; returned to England, made love to her, married her, she never suspecting that her husband had once been the clerk of her defunct father."

"And you tell this to your wife?—for I am your wife."

"You were my wife, but before I left America I took advantage of its amiable and elastic laws and procured a divorce."

"And you have married again?"

"Yes; but let me end this. You can marry again. You say you are rich. You leave me alone and I will leave you alone. Is that agreed?"

"No, you cold-blooded wretch! From this time forward I shall devote my life and fortune to your destruction. Go!"

Mr. Goldsworthy sauntered out of the room, laughingly carelessly, but, I fancied, uneasily.

No sooner had he gone than she called me into the room.

"You heard all. I see it by your face. I have a terrible duty to perform, and you must aid me. Do not speak. We have not a moment to lose. You know Mrs. Goldsworthy? Now, I say you do! She was the first lady who called upon you. I watched and called afterward. Take this letter to her at once. It may save her from life-long misery. Go!"

"What do you come here for?" said Mrs. Goldsworthy as she entered the room to receive me. "This is not the address I gave you. I was at Mr. Goldsworthy's."

"No, madam; neither is it the name you gave. But I have come from a Mrs. Adele Fairholt."

"That woman! That woman, whose name my husband so often murmurs in his sleep? What can she want with me?"

"I do not know. Here is a letter from her. But listen to this, madam," I said sternly. "The next time you have anything to do with a detective tell him your right name. I have been misled all through this case, and I throw it up."

"Stay! stay!" she pleaded. "Let me at least read this letter before you go."

As she read the letter I shall never forget the look of horror and agony that came into her face.

"It cannot be true," she muttered; "and yet, this is almost what I feared. This letter"—and here she held up one which had been enclosed—"this letter must seal my fate. Mr. Grant, you must not leave me. I hear my husband's footsteps. If—if—I know not what to say—he may kill me, if this letter be true. Retire into this room and listen, as you did before."

I would have objected, but I heard Mr. Goldsworthy coming upstairs humming a tune; and, as I really did not know what excuse I should make to the gentleman, I accepted the lady's invitation and retired.

No sooner had I done so than the lady threw the letter on the table and hastily retreated behind a curtain.

In came Mr. Goldsworthy, seeming quite pleased with himself. He had not been there more than a few moments when he caught sight of the letter, and in a careless way picked it up. As he read the letter his whole aspect changed. His eyes appeared starting from his head, beads of perspiration stood upon his forehead, and, as he leaned for support on the table, he shook it with his trembling. All this was closely watched by his wife, who had come from her hiding place.

"Ruined! ruined!" he muttered as he let the letter fall on the floor. "Ruined by that American fiend. My wife must not know this——"

"Your wife does know it," said the lady sternly as she advanced further into the room and confronted him.

"Emily!" he cried as he trembled in every limb. "What is the meaning of this?"

"You ask me the meaning of this?" she laughed in scorn. "Well, perhaps I had better tell you."

Once more he tried to assume his jaunty air, as he had done with the other woman, and, shrugging his shoulders, replied:

"I really think it would be as well. You see, it will save time, and I have an appointment in the city.

"The appointment in the city you will never keep."

"This to me!" he cried passionately. "Have a care, Emily. I would bear more from you than any other woman——"

"More than from Adele Fairholt! Oh, you should not say that. She has the first claim upon you!"

"Oh!" he laughed. "I see what the cause is. Jealousy! I suppose Adele has been here. She has been wicked enough to relate a lot of falsehoods, and you have been silly enough to believe them."

"Do you deny that you loved her?"

"I do not deny that I met the young lady, or that we had a pretty strong flirtation; that was all."

"Then, if she states that you married her, that would be utterly false?"

"Utterly. There, Emily, I am not going to beat about the bush any longer. I confess that I did live with this Adele, who was then a raw country girl. But as for marriage, I never thought of the thing, and neither did she, until she found out that I had grown rich, and then, with her nation's acuteness, she comes here and tries to draw money from me. I will not be bullied, for to have given her money would have been to own that she was in the right."

"You swear this?"

"Most positively."

"Liar!" she thundered with the air of a tragedy queen. "Liar! I hold the certificate of your marriage, and also that of the birth of your child."

"My child! I never knew one was born," he gasped as he staggered back.

"So you own it at last," she continued with withering contempt.

"I own to nothing. Adele shall answer for this dearly and deeply. As for you, madam," he continued, as he tried to catch her wrist. But she sprang back and faced him like a tigress.

"Do not touch me!" she exclaimed with a shudder. "Listen, Julius. I loved you—loved you dearly—and was at first happy. Then strange tales of your gambling reached my ears. You drank deeply. Talked in your sleep. I became convinced that at one time or other you

had absconded with some one's property. I had you watched by a detective."

"You—fool, you have ruined me!"

"And what have you made me? The mistress of a thief!"

"Silence, woman! Oh, by heavens; I will murder you!"

"Think not to terrify me. Remember, I am not your wife. This house and all in it belongs to me. I doubt not, Julius, you have taken good care to forge my name to my bonds. I shall not prosecute you for that. But go! Fly the country to-night and never let me see you again."

She had cowed his savage nature and he glared fearfully at her as he stooped to pick up the letter.

"You may destroy the letter, but there are stronger proofs than that."

"Where are they?"

"In the hands of the police."

With a cry of mingled rage, horror and despair he dropped the damning letter again.

"Traitoress, you have ruined me—I, who did love you when you were only a child! When you did not know me, even—would have disdained to look upon your father's poor clerk."

"My father's poor clerk!" she cried in astonishment. "Then you are——"

"Richard Jeffery. You know so much that you may as well know that. The other names were assumed for reasons, I doubt not, you know; or, if not, that you can easily guess. Tell that also to the police."

"I have not told one word to the police," she moaned. "I would have spared you that, although you have ruined me."

"You have not! Then who has?"

"Your wife, Adele Fairholt!"

"Curse her! A thousand times curse her!" he roared. "Would that I had shot her down when we were up in the mountains of Nevada! I very nearly did, once or twice. If she has given advice to the police I must bolt. But she would not do that."

"She tells me in her letter that she has. Did you, when you left her—taking all the old man's money—did you leave by mistake a small tin box, such as a very small cash box?"

"I—I threw it down the pit shaft!" he replied, turning as livid as death and speaking in a hoarse voice.

"It was found. Her father broke it open, read the contents and placed it in her hands as the means of revenge if she should ever meet you again."

"Great heavens! And do you know the contents of the box?" he asked anxiously.

"No; but in the letter which I had from this woman she says they are horrible. But, whatever they are, they are by this time in the hands of the police."

He uttered a fearful groan and fell back in his chair.

"Emily! Emily!" he cried in abject terror, "you—you tell me you have forgiven me. Do more. Save me! If the police know all I shall be sent to penal servitude for life—perhaps death. Have mercy on me—mercy!"

"Death!" gasped the lady, in her turn becoming pale—"death!"

"I don't know what I am saying! Imprisonment, if only for a short time, would mean death to me. You have, I know, a large quantity of money in your desk. Give it to me and I will leave America, never to return again. In mercy do this. Pity me! Pity me!"

He was now as abject as he had before been bold and swaggering.

"Yes, you shall have the money. Go, prepare for your journey. I will get the money. Go!"

"A hundred thanks!"

"Go! Do not attempt to touch me. Go!" And he shrank from the room like a whipped hound.

"Mr. Grant," she said, coming to my retreat, "you have witnessed a terrible scene, but I trust in your honor to keep it secret. He must escape. Remain here. Let him go first."

I saw the artfulness of this, but could not refuse. She went to her desk and drew forth a roll of bank-notes, and then she beheld the letter Goldsworthy had dropped. She snatched it up and read it hurriedly. Never shall I forget the cry of horror she gave, and then her face became hard, cold and beautiful as a marble statue. She replaced the notes in her desk, which she locked very calmly. Then, with the letter clenched in her left hand, she awaited the return of her husband. He had only put on an overcoat, and he entered stealthily, as if in fear.

"Now, Emily—now, the money. I must fly at once."

"Hold!" she cried as she placed herself before the door. "You shall not pass!"

"What mean you by this? Did you not promise to forgive me?"

"I promised to forgive the forger, thief and swindler—to pardon the man who had ruined me—but not the murderer of my father!"

As she spoke she pointed at him. Never had I seen a more magnificent creature than the woman, or so abject a wretch as the man. He begged, he protested his innocence, he declared that he had shot the merchant by accident; in fact, admitted his guilt in a hundred ways, but always so that he might escape.

Then there was a loud knocking at the street door, then voices on the stairs. I knew the sounds well—so did Goldsworthy. He flew at his wife, and, grasping her by the throat, would have strangled her had I not come from my place of concealment and grappled with him. But before I could handcuff him he had flung me off—for he had a giant's strength—and bounded through a side door. I, with some policemen, followed, but before we could reach his dressing-room the sharp report of a pistol told us that the villain had destroyed himself. Such proved to be the case. Richard Jeffery, alias Fairholt, alias Julius Goldsworthy, had destroyed himself.

Mrs. Fairholt went to Paris, where she became one of the queens of fashion, but Mrs. Goldsworthy, having resumed her father's name, retired to some secluded place in California and passed the remainder of her life in doing acts of charity. That was the last I ever heard or saw of "The Veiled Lady."

WAITER HAS $30,000

IT pays to be a waiter—in San Francisco. This was established conclusively when the Superior Court appointed an administrator for the estate of Harry Hastings, for years a waiter at the Elks' Club here.

When the Hastings case came up in court, it also was shown for the first time why so comparatively few waiters have given up their present jobs to seek more lucrative jobs in the shipyards, as has been the case in many other trades.

An inventory of Hastings' estate showed that it was worth, at a conservative estimate, $30,000; practically the entire sum being collected through tips.

STORIES OF GREAT DETECTIVES

BY A NEW YORK JOURNALIST

The writer has had occasion professionally to learn a great deal about the real detectives. He has talked with them, corresponded with them, heard the narrative of their lives and exploits, and enjoyed in reality all the interest and excitement connected with these men that is constantly presented in the fiction of the day.

For the benefit of the thousands of readers of "Mystery Magazine," we propose to relate some of our experiences, and give a rapid glance at the most noted men in the different cities of the United States. The number of professional detectives is now very large. They are employed in every branch of the United States Government; all the great cities have a trained force, and the private agencies are to be found in all the cities, with correspondents throughout the civilized world. Our "Stories of Great Detectives" give, perhaps, the first familiar relation ever attempted of the characteristics of the great detectives who have made the detection of crime a new science.

GEORGE H. BANGS

GEORGE H. BANGS was the general superintendent of Pinkerton's National Detective Agency. He lived in New York, and had his headquarters at an office in Exchange Place. Allan Pinkerton regarded him as one of the greatest of living detectives. He was very skillful in planning for the discovery of deep schemes of crime, and when a man was once in his power, he had great tact and force of language in obtaining a confession. He once made such an effort with a prisoner held at the branch agency in Philadelphia. Allan Pinkerton, in one of his books, thus relates the result, and also shows how these matters are managed with detectives:

"The interview with a crook took place on Saturday afternoon. During the remainder of the evening, and throughout the following day, Wales continued in a kind of gloomy lethargy. He was apparently revolving in his mind the suggestions of Mr. Bangs, and painting to himself, perhaps, in still more somber colors, the consequences of his conviction to those near and dear to him.

"Occasionally he rallied for a moment, and made some remark to Thomas, or other detectives, who relieved the latter at stated intervals. In no instance did such remarks apply to himself or his case, but always to indifferent or frivolous subjects, as if they were so many efforts to escape from a distasteful self-communion.

"Acting under instructions, however, the detectives gave him no excuse for a sustained conversation, but read or smoked in silence, and responded to his questions or observations only with rigid monosyllables. This threw Wales entirely back upon himself, and left him no other alternative to meditate on his situation, present and perspective.

"Mr. Bangs, of course, heard from time to time of how his prisoner was occupied, and felt no desire to break in on the current of his reflections. Sufficient had been said, he thought, to give ample room and verge enough for a review by Wales of his own sad predicament, and to lead him out logically to the conclusion desired—that a full confession was the best for his own interests.

"Late Sunday evening the superintendent called him into the room, and after inquiring as to the captive's health, exchanged a few remarks with him about the weather and other commonplaces. The share of Wales in this brief conversation was clearly that of a person who was preoccupied by graver themes, and who suffered the abasement which comes over folks in the presence of rectitude.

"Of himself or his concerns he spoke not a word. He had evidently not yet screwed up his courage to the sticking-point, which, in his case, meant the plowing-up of the past and its criminal associations, to prepare for the growth of a more manly future.

"Mr. Bangs, therefore, who was a true Lavater in his profession, remained with Wales but a few brief moments. As he returned downstairs he said to himself:

"'We must give him enough time; the medicine works well!'

"Monday passed over without any incident worth mention—gloomily enough for the captive Wales, brimful of occupation for the busy superintendent. The latter did not quite forget his prisoner, however; he merely left him alone, 'in order,' as Mr. Thomas pertinently remarked, 'that he might work out his own salvation.'

"The following day, about noon, the officer named was seated in the room with Wales, when the latter jumped up from his chair, and without any preamble, inquired if Mr. Bangs was in the building?

"'Can't say,' replied Thomas, without even looking up from the book which he had been reading for an hour or so previous.

"The prisoner sighed heavily, and without speaking any further, made a few hasty turns up and down the room. In stolen glances, Mr. Thomas noted that he had his hands thrust firmly into his pants-pocket, that he was really walking, and not, as usual, lounging, and that the dark corrugations of his brow had given place to a more tranquil but resolute expression.

"'He's going to break, I'll bet five dollars on it!' was the mental proposition of the detective to some imaginary skeptic.

"'Did you want to see the superintendent?' he next inquired of Wales.

"'Yes, please; I should like to see him to-day,' replied the captive, returning to his chair near the stove.

"Thomas at once passed the word outside, but it was quite half an hour before Mr. Bangs entered the room, and temporarily released the detective from his charge.

"He greeted Wales courteously, and took a chair in front of that which the latter occupied.

"A single glance at the face of the prisoner informed him that his success had been complete, more so than he had dared to expect; for whereas he might have been content with the betrayal of the forgers, he now saw plainly that Wales intended to make a 'clean breast' of it.

"There was no mistaking the quiet purpose of the eye, averted partially though it was; nor the frank resignation on his features, paler even than usual, but freed from the rough lines of suspense and obstinacy.

"The swindler had become a man again, in having resolved on the purgation of his conscience. It were needless to detail the long interview that ensued between Wales and my general superintendent. The criminal confessed with absolute unreserve; and Mr. Bangs had little more

to do than to name the points on which he desired to be enlightened.

"Almost at the outset came an explanation of the secret that had baffled and perplexed us from the beginning of the operations: that in all the thieving, swindling, and forging transactions there were but two accomplices, W. R. Wales himself, and R. L. Dudley! The former, in person, was the one who had plundered the mails; and the latter had been the forger and collector of drafts, first at Pittsburgh, under his real name, and elsewhere under the various *aliases* of Randall, Cone, Davis, Rugby and Gray."

The details of the confession are not necessary here. The account concluded in these words:

"His (Wales') money and other valuables were now taken from him, and held for Adams Express Company pending his trial. In their favor also a check was obtained from him for the money he held in the bank at Yarmouth, and he surrendered to them the deed of the quarry property at Redrock, which represented all of his plunder that remained."

Mr. Bangs has been noted for the greatest energy throughout his life, being simply tireless. To be on the wing night and day was a common thing with him, and such was his elasticity of spirits and vigor that he always seemed fresh, and never failed to be alert in his duty.

His responsibilities were very great at that time. In the vast business of the Pinkerton agency, both the variety and urgency of the cases tax the highest detective ability. Individuals, corporations, city and State authorities submit their cases, and want mystery cleared up without delay. From the nature of things that Mr. Bangs and his assistants were expected to do every day, one would think that he possessed a power to penetrate all secrets.

And he did, with time and money.

Woe to him or her with a guilty secret, and George W. Bangs working to find it out.

Price Lewis will be the celebrated officer to be featured in the next article of this series. Don't miss reading it.

CALIFORNIA FOSSIL MINE

CALIFORNIA is indeed a land of wonders and extremes.

Not the least of its sights, though by no means the best known, is the asphaltum bed, six miles west of the heart of Los Angeles, where for countless ages have been preserved the bones of thousands of animals, most of them prehistoric in their origin. Various names have been given to these beds—the La Brea Beds, the Fossil Gardens, the Hancock Brea Deposits, the Death Trap, the Pit, the Bone Field, and half a dozen others.

The deposits are by no means of recent discovery; they have, in fact, been known for over a century. The earliest record found is that of the Mission fathers, who, writing in 1769, state that the tar was used for calking the boats and for roofing. Later the natives and the settlers of the region employed it for roofing, for fuel and for paving, and in Los Angeles the roofs of some of the first adobe houses were covered with the asphaltum brought from La Brea springs. At various times during this period bones were reported to have been found, but it was supposed that these were only those of the ranch animals; in fact, this was the opinion of no less an authority than the State Geologist in 1865.

When the holders of the title under the original Spanish grants sold the property to American interests, it is interesting to learn that the curious little tar springs appearing at various places on the ranch were considered injurious to the property. It was not then dreamed that the whole region was rich in petroleum, or that scarcely a mile to the north were to be located some of the richest oil prospects of all time.

After the Civil War the demand for tar rose, and soon carloads were dug from these beds and sold; but so many bones were found mixed with the tar that the market for it ceased. The big hole left by the digging soon filled with water and tar and oil, and a lake was formed. Gas bubbles can always be seen breaking on the surface of this lake.

As early as 1875 the deposits were recognized as prehistoric, and a selection of bones identified as those of an extinct species of tiger. But it was not until 1908 that the work of excavation began. In June of that year, Mrs. Erskine M. Ross, then owner of the ranch, gave the Southern California Academy of Sciences the privilege of excavating fossils. From that time on, several schools and scientific foundations were accorded similar privileges for a certain number of months. Many of the fossils were placed in the museum at Exposition Park, in Los Angeles, where they are on public exhibition. The bones as dug out are invariably in an excellent state of preservation, the oil having penetrated them thoroughly.

The animals that fell victims to this perpetual, silent death-trap represent all geologic ages from the Pleiocene down to the present time; the trapping of unwary animals is, in fact, going on all the time. The best authorities tell us that the tragedies took place somewhat after this fashion:

The outpourings of the tar-springs often formed pools, or even streams, which, as the dust and gravel carried by the prevailing west winds settled and became mixed with the tar, acquired all the appearance of a hard surface. Sooner or later rain would fall and collect on the top. It was then that the unwary elephant or saber-tooth tiger or camel or bird, seeing the water, came to drink. Not until the victim tried to leave the miry pool did it discover itself to be trapped. The more it then struggled, the more firmly imbedded it became; until finally it was unable longer to move. In a short time it sank deeper and deeper in the soft tar, until after a few days he was completely lost to sight. As this process has gone on for ages, many animals of every conceivable description—bears, condors, saber-tooth tigers, elephants, the giant sloth, bison, peacocks, and a host of birds and smaller quadrupeds—came to be embedded here almost in a solid mass of bones. As late as the '80s colts were known to have been thus lost in the mire, and skunks and birds are trapped there to-day. In fact, the pits may be said to constitute a natural mausoleum, in which is preserved a long and graphic record of the animals that have inhabited Southern California through past ages of geologic time.

So nearly do the fossils found here represent some of the present-day African and Asiatic species that some scientists are inclined to accept them, if not as proof, at least as evidence that these continents were at one time connected with the American continent. Be that as it may, the beds and the fossils from them will always be of prime interest to the student of natural history, paleontology or geology; and so far as can now be seen, there exists here an inexhaustible storehouse of relics of the past.

SOME SCRAPS OF PAPER

A Detective Serial

BY POLICE CAPTAIN HOWARD

CHAPTER FIVE

A STRENUOUS TIME FOR THE DETECTIVE

ARRIVING at the widow's residence, the detective entered, and was met by the policeman at the door, who told him that no one was inside except the two servanuts,

"All right," said Foss; "don't allow any one to enter while I am inside of the house, because I want to carry on some examinations, and I don't want to be disturbed. Be sure and keep a sharp look-out for intruders."

"I will, sir," the policeman said; and then the detective walked into the hall, and closed the door behind him.

A minute after the dwarf came up the path, and seeing the policeman, he dashed out of sight before the officer spied him. He hid behind the shrubbery, and stopping for a minute, he shook both of his fists in the air towards the officer, and said:

"That fellow is in my way. I must find out what that detective-fellow is up to. If I don't the boss will beat me."

He darted up in behind the shrubs, and crept along the ground without making any noise, until he reached a point directly opposite the library.

From his place of concealment, the dwarf could see the detective in the room rummaging among the papers in the desk. When he made this discovery, he gave vent to a grunt of satisfaction, and settled himself so that he could see all Foss was doing without being seen.

When Foss entered the house, he went direct to the library, and opened the desk. He searched all the drawers and pigeon-holes, turning over papers and letters, but found no trace of any photograph or anything else that would be of interest to him.

At last the detective commenced to look for a secret drawer, and he was rewarded by finding one in the side of the desk. He opened it, and to his joy, he found a locket in which there were two miniatures, one was of Mrs. Howland, and the other was that of a man, which he immediately concluded was Rose.

This supposition was verified when Foss found the widow's marriage certificate, and a letter which Rose had written to his wife shortly after they were married. This was all the drawer contained, and after searching a short time longer, the detective put the locket, the letter, and the marriage-certificate in his pocket, and took his departure.

The handwriting in the letter was the same as that on the envelope, and in the note which the detective had made out of the scraps of paper.

When Foss left the house, the dwarf followed him closely on the opposite side of the way. This time the strange creature was more cautions in his actions, and was careful not to attract any attention.

The detective saw that the criminal must have been acquainted with the house before committing the crime. Whoever wrote the note which had been torn up and thrown into the cuspidor must have had an interview with the widow.

What the answer was, which the author of the note expected to receive, the detective did not find out. In regard to this he was baffled.

As soon as night came, Foss determined to assume a disguise, and visit all of the low places in the city. He arrived at his house just as it was becoming dark.

The dwarf had tracked the detective all the way home, and then, when he saw that Foss did not come out again, after waiting for nearly an hour on the opposite side of the street, he went off muttering.

"Who would you injure, you scamp?" exclaimed a man who came up to the dwark's side.

The voice acted like magic upon the dwarf. His whole manner changed in an instant, and he was as docile as a kitten.

He looked up at his interlocutor, and exclaimed, in a whining tone of voice:

"Don't lick me, master; don't lick poor Phil; he didn't mean anything."

"Yes, you did, you scamp!" returned the man, as he gave the dwarf a slap alongside of the head, and causing him to stagger up against the side of a wall. "Yes, you did; you meant me."

"Indeed I didn't; indeed I didn't."

"Stop your lying, you scamp."

Whack! Whack! Whack! Whack!

The man now beat him vigorously on the sides of his head, and the fellow howled:

"I—please don't—I meant that detective-fellow you sent me to watch."

The minute the dwarf said this the man stopped, and then asked in an excited manner:

"What about the detective, Phil?"

The dwarf was sullen now, and got out of reach of the man's hands.

"Wouldn't you like to know?" queried the dwarf, with a leer, as he kept darting back and forth.

They were on a street on which there were no houses, and nothing but vacant sand-lots.

The man was furious with rage, and rushed after the dwarf. But in spite of all that he could do, he could not catch Phil, and he was forced to use other tactics to gain the information that he desired.

The man was tall and well-built, with an evil cast of countenance. His features were dark and forbidding. His forehead was low and his eyes were sunk deep into his head.

When he found that the dwarf was too agile for him, he stopped to catch his breath, and he bit his lips with chagrin; then in a conciliatory tone, he said:

"Phil, if you tell me, I'l give you some whisky."

This acted like a charm. The dwarf was passionately fond of whisky, and for a drink he would do almost anything.

The man threw the flask, and the dwarf caught it, and walked boldly up to his master's side.

"Now, Phil, tell me about the detective."

"After you left, I kept a sharp watch outside of the lawyer-chap's office, and then, after a while, I saw Foss and Frazer come out, and carry a large box over to the safe deposit vaults, where they locked it up in one of the boxes. They came out, and then the detective went home. He stayed in his rooms some time."

"What did he do in his rooms?"

"I don't know. I tried to get into the house, but every place about it was so securely locked, that I was compelled to stay outside."

"What next?"

"He came out after some time, and then went out to the house on McAllister street."

"What did he do there?"

"Went into a room where there was a desk, and then, after searching a long time, he opened a secret drawer in the side, and took out some papers and a locket."

By this time the man and the dwarf reached an old shanty, and their conversation ceased. The man rapped at the door several times, and at last he and Phil were admitted by an old woman.

After the dwarf stopped watching Foss' house, a young woman took up her station at the post the dwarf had just left, and eyed the windows of the detective's room.

She was watching the house for some purpose, for she scrutinized every one closely who went in or out.

But what of Foss while all this was taking place. As soon as he entered the house he went direct to his room, and after reaching the door and lighting the gas, he took off his coat, and taking the locket from his pocket, he looked at the picture of the man Rose, long and intently, studying every line and expression.

After looking at the picture for some time, the detective said, as he closed the locket up and placed it and the papers which he had taken from his safe under a brick which hid a cavity in the fireplace:

"Now, if I meet Rose, I will know him."

He then sat down at his table and ate his supper, which had been brought up to him by a servant.

The cavity in which Foss hid the papers and the locket was made in such a manner that the closest observer could not find it unless its existence was known.

As soon as the detective had finished his supper, he commenced to dress for the expedition which he intended to undertake in a few hours. In a wardrobe Foss had a number of disguises, one of which he selected and laid on the bed until he had finished painting his face.

When he had dyed his skin, the detective put on the costume, which was that of a Mexican rough, a character which one can see any place in San Francisco.

"Now," said Foss, when his disguise was complete, "I think it will be a hard matter for any one to recognize me."

He was correct. A complete change had taken place in his appearance, and he looked as formidable as any villain that one could find in the city.

The detective waited until it was ten o'clock, and then, arising from his chair, he turned his light out, locked his room-door, and left the house.

The woman, who had been watching the house, the moment she saw the detective come down the front-steps, followed him down the street. When he reached Kearney street, she came up to Foss' side and peered at him a second, and walked on ahead.

The detective did not notice the woman, but when he reached the next street some one jostled against him, and showing a note into his hand, disappeared in the crowd.

He was astonished at this action, and on looking around he failed to find out who it was that had placed the note into his hand.

Looking at the envelope the detective found that it was addressed to him, and he was quite chagrined to think that his disguise had been penetrated.

"It won't do to go any further with this on," Foss muttered. "I must go home and get another disguise."

The detective accordingly retraced his steps, and as he had only a short distance to go, in a few minutes he was again in his room. He took off the Mexican dress, and put on that of a tramp. When this was done, Foss opened the note which had been put into his hand, and found that it was in a woman's handwriting, and read as follows:

"HUGH FOSS: "Your life is threatened. Several men have sworn to kill you, and I would advise you to keep out of all rough and dangerous places. Drop the Howland case, and don't try to trace up the forgeries committed on Richard Frazer's name. A FRIEND."

"Who can this be," murmured the detective, as he finished reading the mysterious communication. "She means well, but it will be impossible for me to heed her warning. A band of men have sworn to take my life? Well, we will see who will come out at the head of the heap. I thank my unknown friend greatly for this warning, it has done one thing, if nothing more; it has shown me that I must be cautious in all that I undertake."

The detective walked up and down the room wrapped in deep meditation. He was trying to think who it was that thought enough of him to warn him of a danger. It was a woman, and from what she said in her note, she must be an associate of his enemies.

Finding that he was only losing valuable time, Foss again left the house and started out in the guise of a tramp to make the round of the criminal resorts, having vividly before him the features of the man he was looking for.

Somehow it seemed to be the detective's fate this evening, that, in spite of his disguises and the precautions which he took, that some one was bound to track him. No sooner had he left the house than a man came from the shadow of a doorway, a few houses above where he resided, and followed cautiously behind him.

Foss walked on, unconscious of any one being in his rear, until he heard the tramp of a man's footsteps behind him. He turned around and saw that he was being followed.

The detective was on Kearney street now, and as it was a warm evening, the street was crowded with promenaders. He watched his opportunity, and darted across the street into a doorway, so that the man who was shadowing him lost sight of where he was going.

The man, when he found that the detective had disappeared, looked up and down the street for some time in a vain endeavor to try and find Foss. At last he gave up looking, and, with a number of muttered curses, he walked off towards the park, where the dives were situated.

The detective, during all this time, was watching the fellow, and when he saw him walk off down the street, he followed on the opposite side. Through alleys and side-streets the fellow went, until at last he reached a low drinking-place, before which was swinging a gaudy sign,

on which was painted in flaring colors the name "Varieties."

The Varieties was situated on a side-street off of Kearney street, and in the heart of Barbary Coast. The name of Barbary Coast was applied in early days to that part of Kearney street bounded by Broadway and Clay street, on one side, and Dupont and Montgomery on the other.

The name has still clung to that portion of San Francisco, and to-day the vile dens of iniquity are worse and more numerous than they were during the days of the gold excitement.

This district is populated principally by Mexicans, and adjoining this to the northward is Africa, inhabited by negroes, and to the southward the world-renowned Chinatown, or, more property speaking, New China, as it was christened a few years ago by a renowned journalist and traveler.

In this part of the city the most brutal fights occur nightly, and it is not an unfrequent occurrence for two or three murders to be recorded every day. The place is poorly patroled by the police, and it is as much as one's life is worth to walk along the streets after midnight, if one is in any way respectably dressed.

The policeman who is assigned to this beat makes it a point to keep out of danger, and to be out of the hearing of any outrage which may occur. In these rows the women are worse than the men, and a great deal more brutal, for, when aroused, their fury knows no bounds.

It will be seen by this that Foss was running a great risk in following the man who had tracked him. In a measure, the tramp-costume protected him, and a few minutes after the man entered the Varieties the detective followed him.

The Varieties was a place where thieves resorted, and besides being a saloon it was a kind of variety theater, where a minstrel performance took place and women were engaged to sing songs in scanty apparel.

The vocalists had not the least stamp of beauty upon their faces, and their voices, in most instances, sounded like some cracked violin, with the E-string broken.

Tables were placed around the room, at which drinks were served to the men and women who made up the audience. At one end of the place were rooms which were reserved for gambling purposes and private consultations.

The chink, chink of the chips could be heard issuing from most of those, interpolated by curses and loud and uproarious laughter.

The man whom the detective was tracking entered one of these rooms just as Foss came into the saloon. The detective took a seat at a table which was vacant and which was next to the partition of the room into which the man had gone. He ordered a glass of beer from the waiter, and sat for some minutes intently gazing at the woman who was singing on the stage. In those dirt-begrimed and bloated features no one recognized the detective, who leaned his head against the partition and tried to catch what was being said. The conversation grew louder, and then the detective heard his name mentioned.

From the conversation, Foss judged that there were three men and two women in the apartment, besides the man who had a few minutes before come in.

"What do you think Foss was up to?" asked one of the men of the newcomer.

"I can't say. I watched the house from the time Phil left, and tracked the cuss to Kearney street in a disguise. He did not go far in this before he turned around suddenly, went back to his rooms and came out dressed in another costume."

The man had not seen the woman, and he could not account for the change of costume.

"Where did Foss go after you followed him in the second disguise?"

"I lost sight of him when we got on Kearney street, and in spite of all that, I could not find him."

The rest of the men, when they heard this, uttered a volume of curses, and from their conversation, it was evident that they were greatly displeased with the report.

A clinking of glasses followed this, and then the man proposed that the party should adjourn to a room upstairs, where they could talk over matters without being overheard.

The party arose from their seats, and the man who had followed Foss opened the door. As he did so, his gaze fell upon the tramp. In an instant his face lighted up, and he exclaimed, in a whisper loud enough for the detective to hear:

"That's Foss now. He has been listening to all that we were saying."

The scoundrel pulled a long murderous-looking knife from his belt, and prepared to jump upon Foss.

The detective arose to his feet the minute he saw that his life was in danger, and pulling his pistols from his pocket he pointed them at the ruffian and fired.

The ball hit the man in the arm, and with a cry of pain he dropped his knife and fell to the floor. It was the only alternative that Foss had, for had he waited a moment longer the fellow would have buried the murderous weapon in the detective's breast.

The firing of the pistol caused the performance to stop, and the audience was thrown into confusion. The two women who were with the men fled the minute the detective fired his pistol.

The woundd man's companions were now in a furious rage. The detective had them covered, and for some minutes they stood undecided how to act. In that time Foss had time to scan the faces of his enemies.

He recognized Andy Suggs and Peter Cole, and when he looked at the third man the detective started, and an exclamation of surprise escaped his lips.

In the person of Suggs' and Cole's companion, Foss recognized the man whose picture was encased in the locket. There was a slight change in the man's features from those in the picture, but notwithstanding this, the detective was confident that the fellow was none other than Charles Rose, the man he had set out to find.

The crowd now commenced to close in on Foss, with the intention of cutting him to pieces. The man he had shot had now recovered, and rising to his feet, he cried out in a loud voice, as he took his knife in his left hand:

"Cut the cur down! He's a detective, and is here spying on us!"

"Into him, boys!" exclaimed Suggs, as he pulled his pistol.

Bang! The confidence-man had fired his pistol, but his aim being unsteady, the ball passed harmlessly over the detective's head and struck a lamp, shattering it into pieces and scattering the burning oil over the heads of the men and women who were standing under it.

This accident threw the audience into confusion, and as at that moment the curtain of the stage caught fire, and the room was filled with smoke, the men and women forgot about the detective, and commenced to rush for the street-door to save themselves from being suffocated.

(To be continued)

CURRENT NEWS

SEE A SNOWBOW

The rare phenomenon of a snowbow was witnessed by heights residents of Hood River, Ore., the other day. Fine snow, mixed with a drizzle of rain, was falling, when the sun burst for a moment from the veiling clouds. With a background of snow-covered hills on the Underwood, Wash., side of the Columbia, the giant bow, spanning the gorge, in its brilliant colors was impressively emphasized.

PERSIMMONS GROW INSIDE

Never more will Sam Murges, a retired farmer of Springfield, Ill., greedily devour persimmons. He has had his fill. It came in the form of an operation after Murges had gone on a persimmons-gathering trip, when he ate most heartily of the plum. When physicians made an incision in his abdomen they found a large ball of persimmons-pulp. It had begun to grow.

FOUND COIN AFTER MANY YEARS

Thirteen years ago, Mrs. M. E. Overby, mother of R. L. Overby, of Dixon, Ky., was visiting Mrs. Townsend, near Clay, and while there lost a $5 gold-piece. A few weeks ago the $5 was found by Mrs. Townsend in the side of the wall, where the money was lost. Mrs. Townsend had Mrs. Overby to visit her during the holidays, and gave her the money she had lost fifteen years ago. Mrs. Overby says the coin is priceless.

BIRD ON SHIP

Weary of wing and starved, a tiny linnet alighted aboard the four-masted schooner *Sophie Christenson*, 1,000 miles from San Francisco, according to Capt. Bob McCarron. A tramp-steamer was hull-down on the horizon when the linnet reached the schooner, and one of the theories as to its long flight was that the bird had been a pet on the vessel, and yearning for land, had sought to fly to the far-away shore. Aboard the schooner is a canary, and as though by instinct, the linnet flew to the cage of the canary, perching precariously while the schooner heaved and tossed. Captain McCarron opened the door of the cage, and the linnet soon recovered. The canary welcomed the linnet, and they are now chums.

HISTORIC PRINTING PRESS

A printing press with a remarkable history is preserved by the University of Oregon. On it was printed, seventy-three years ago, the first number of the Oregon *Spectator* at Oregon City. This was the first press to be used west of the Rocky Mountains, and it was transported to Oregon City by George Abernathy, the first provisional governor of Oregon. The old Washington hand-press was in use in Oregon City until the late sixties, when it was removed to Eugene. While being trasported up the Willamette River the press was shipwrecked, but after a time it was raised, and continued its journey. For nearly half a century it was in use at Eugene, when it was presented to the State University. The University of Washington at Seattle also has a famous old hand-press, which was used in 1847 to print the California *Star*, the first paper in San Francisco, and later was used in printing the first number of the Portland *Oregonian* in 1850, and the first paper in Seattle in 1863.

YOU TASTE WITH YOUR NOSE

The sensation of taste, while of common and constant experience, is highly complicated in its nature. What is commonly called taste is not a simple sensation at all, but rather a complex. In addition to the actual functioning of the apparatus properly pertaining to the sense of taste, the tongue receives impressions of various other sorts, all of which go to make up this complex. As finally recorded in the consciousness, the taste of any substance has to do with its heat or coolness, perhaps with a mild amount of pain, certainly with astringency or acridity—which are in themselves further complexes of thermic and tactile sensations—and above all with smell. The reader will probably agree that ice cream and coffee are entirely different from their true selves when served at inappropriate temperatures; and it is a matter of record that a person of the keenest taste may make the most ludicrous errors if asked, blindfolded and with his nose stopped, to identify substances placed in his mouth.

HONESTY IN PRISONERS

Recently a visitor to the Tombs, New York City, dropped $140, and although he was pretty sure where he had lost the money, he gave up hope of getting it again. Besides, there was a repugnance to telling how careless he had been when the very surroundings should have enjoined caution upon him. Strange to relate, a prisoner found the money, and duly handed it in to the warden. Seems an odd thing to many, but it is by no means unprecedented.

Once, during a visit to Sing Sing, a Manhattan politician, in an experimental mood, left his gold watch and chain on a work-bench in one of the buildings where convicts were engaged in fabric-work. He kept a sharp eye out, for he didn't propose to lose his watch, which had been presented to him by admiring associates of a ward club of which he had been president. After ten minutes, the politician returned, and could not find his watch. He had noticed several convicts passing in and out; one of them passed quite near him. He complained of his loss to the head keeper. The convicts were lined up. One of them, the man who passed close, grinned. "Are you looking for your watch?" he asked. "I certainly am," said the politician severely. "It's in your pocket." So it was. The man who passed close had put it there. He was a clever pickpocket. He enjoyed the laugh, and then said: "If it had only been gold." The politician retorted that it was gold. "Oh, no, it isn't," said the convict. "But it was given to me by my club. It is an expensive watch." The convict grinned again. "I know the club," said he, "and I know the man they gave the money to buy it. He's up here now. He bought a pretty good watch—a fairly good one—but it's plated."

TALKS TO SON SLAIN IN WAR

Sir Conan Doyle, who had announced his faith in spirit-life, possesses papers which, he claims, "prove the survival of and communion with the dead beyond the shadow of a doubt."

A representative of the London *Daily Mail* examined these papers at Sir Conan's home, and found them to consist of letters from correspondents relating their experiences with a medium he had recommended to them. All these correspondents, who live in different parts of the country, have lost near-relatives or dear friends in the war, and out of twenty-six attempts to communicate with these dead, only two were failures, Sir Conan said. He added that both he and Lady Doyle are fully convinced they have actually communicated with their son, who also died in active service.

CORK STONE-HOUSE SINGS

Among the many strange building in India, one of the most curious is a house which actually sings.

Except for its extraordinary exterior decorations, it is, to all appearances, no different from other buildings in the neighborhood, but as the wind sweeps around its niches and eaves a very curious singing noise is emitted which can be heard for some distance down the street.

For a long time the music remained a mystery, but at last an engineer solved the puzzle. He discovered that the sound was caused by the material with which the house was built—a porous cork stone, and the wind, blowing through the little holes, was the cause of the music.

The building is known as the Palace of the Winds, and is situated at Geypore.

CHINA'S ENCYCLOPEDIA

The first European encyclopedia was probably the work of Abulpharagiu, the first volume of which was published 767 years ago. To the Chinese, however, belongs the credit for having originated the encyclopedia idea, and China boasts of having the largest of these. The Great Encyclopedia of China is by far the most stupendous literary accomplishment in the history of the world. The work of compilation has been carried on for centuries, and has engaged the labors of over 2,000 scholars. The *Yung-Lo-Ta-Tien*, as the work is called, comprises over 22,000 sections, and is bound in 11,000 volumes, each half an inch in thickness. The work contains a total of 917,480 pages. The volumes when laid flat one upon another form a stack of books 450 feet high. There are only a few complete sets of this gigantic work in existence. The first English encyclopedia was issued in 1620, and the great French one was published in 1751 and succeeding years. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* was first published by William Smellie in 1771.

VOICES IN THE FOG

Some day we shall probably have radiophone warnings all along the dangerous Alaska coast, giving oral warning by giant phonographs of various reefs and rock promontories. The ship's officer, groping his way in a fog, will hear: "You are within one mile of Seymour reef; keep off," and he will hasten to keep off; and if he doesn't, there will probably be another voice saying: "You are within five hundred yards of the reef; what are you trying to go, you squarehead!" With this sort of protection, almost anybody ought to be able to take a ship to Skagway and back without piling up anywhere.

On the Atlantic Coast they are experimenting with a radiophone warning at the Point Judith lighthouse, and have installed a device that projects its voice eight miles out to sea. The mariner comes along in a fog, and at the eight-mile limit the voice speaks: "Point Judith light," and if he keeps coming, at two miles from shore the voice reminds him: "You are getting closer; keep off." After that it is his own fault if he piles up on the rocks.

When the ocean-going ships are all armed with this device, what an interminable and confusing marine chatter will pervade the ocean on foggy, misty days or dark nights. It will sound like a meeting of New York citizens discussing the proposed closing of the saloons. By all means, there should be something in the marine laws against the use of expletives by radiophone. Imagine the sea oaths that would come out of the fog along the busy sea roads if the business of radio conversation were not censored.

WATER WITHOUT SPRINGS, RIVERS OR RAIN

Mr. George Hubbard, F. S. A., F. R. I. B. A., speaking at the Royal Institute of British Architects, says the London *Times*, described how it was possible to obtain a water supply in the absence of springs, rivers and rains.

At the outset he explained that the atmosphere which was warmed during the day was capable of containing a greater percentage of aqueous vapor than it could retain if it were chilled below the dewpoint during the night. The deposition of the aqucous vapor took place freely upon a condensing surface thermally isolated from the earth by a good nonconductor of heat. He referred to the ancient deep-ponds which formed the water supply to Neolithic man in his settlements on the hilltops and to natural deep-ponds in the Colesberg district of Cape Colony, where, in the absence of springs, streams, and rains ponds have a higher water level in the morning than they had in the previous evening.

Mr. Hubbard proceeded to explain how he and his brother constructed a dew-pond in a very low-lying piece of land to test the question as to whether it would be possible to obtain a water supply even under unfavorable conditions in the absence of rain, springs or streams. They began by excavating the earth over an area of 100 feet square to a depth of one foot six inches; over this they laid a bed of four inches of cement-concrete, and thickly coated the surface of this with pitch. The surface of the pitch was then spread over with fine sand, and mica slabs, two feet square and two inches thick, were laid in regular order on top of the sand; about an inch space was left around each slab. In order to keep these slabs quite dry, and so preserve their heat, nonconducting property, the whole surface of the pond was covered with three-quarters inch of asphalt. The asphalt ran into the spaces between the slabs, but when it was completed it presented an even black appearance over the whole pond. At an early hour on an autumn morning, after a rainless night, the pond presented an extraordinary appearance. The whole surface looked like a chessboard with some 2,500 perfect white squares all ruled off regularly by hard pitch black lines about one inch wide between them.

There was very little dew on the grass around the pond, but in the pond, immediately above each mica square, tall white hoar-frost was standing, but there was not a trace of hoar-frost on the asphalt above the joints, which stood out as hard black lines. In a few hours the sun melted the hoar-frost, and hundreds, if not thousands, of gallons of water lay in great pools and puddles on the surface of the pond. It was a comparatively warm day, and the asphalt, protected as it was by the mica slabs, retained the heat, and the sun in the course of the day dried up the pond.

LIVED FOR 21 YEARS MINUS A STOMACH

One of the most remarkable cases in the history of medical science, which has baffled the leading physicians and surgeons of the world, has just come to light in the death of Mrs. Laura Maggini, prominent member of the local Italian colony and pioneer resident of San Francisco.

Mrs. Maggini was in her eighty-sixth year, and for twenty-one years, following an operation, she had lived without a stomach. Dr. Charles Brigham performed the operation at St. Luke's Hospital, after all hope for her had been given up.

At the time it was believed that she could live only a few months at the most, but Mrs. Maggini rallied, and in a short time was in better health than she had enjoyed for several years. Up to the time of her death she was active, and took a keen interest in the affairs of her family.

REMAINS OF ANCIENT AMERICAN DISCOVERED

Geologists and anthropologists are having a lively controversy among themselves over certain human remains which have been unearthed at Vero, Fla. Human bones were found in geological formations of the pleistocene, or glacial period; man existed in America during that early age. But objectors interpose the skeleton remains are those of a modern sort of man, a regular Indian type. So recent type at that period is incredible. The individual must have been buried in the ancient strata.

The other side answers that burial is out of question. The formation of the earth above the bones indicated gradual natural accumulation, and not the heaping of earth into a grave. That the bones were scattered some twenty feet from the others, which indicates that they drifted while on the surface (how could buried bones move twenty feet through the soil); and further, that the fact of the remains being of a modern type of man merely shows that this modern type of man lived in the pleistocene age.

GOOSE DIGESTED GOLD

A few days ago the family of C. C. Taylor, of Bellefonte, Pa., decided to feast upon a goose that they had purchased from a farmer. The goose was killed, and in preparing it for the oven, Mrs. Taylor felt some very hard substance in the fowl's gizzard. This aroused her curiosity, and when she cleaned the gizzard, she made a close examination and found a piece of yellow metal about the size of a nickel. Curious to know what it was, she took it to the Bellefonte Trust Company, where it was decided that it was what remained of a $5 gold-piece. It was worn entirely smooth on both sides, and all the milling was gone from the edges; inasmuch as the goose was only about sixteen months old, and it could not have swallowed the money before it was almost full-grown, it is evidence that the constant grind in a goose's gizzard will reduce almost anything in due time.

As a matter of dollars and cents, the coin will be sent to the Philadelphia mint for appraisal to find out just how much of its valuation remains, and then it will be up to mathematicians to calculate just how much gold the goose used in its digestive functions daily.

REMARKABLE CASES OF LONGEVITY

Mrs. Louise Wert, aged 103 years 6 months and 15 days, one of the oldest women in Pennsylvania, died from natural causes at the home of her granddaughter, Mrs. Solomon Henry, of Oaks, Montgomery County. Mrs. Wert for a number of years attracted great interest, owing to her remarkable constitution and to the fact that up to the time of her death she fortunately suffered little from the usual infirmities of old age. She was the widow of Isaac Wert and is survived by two relatives only—the granddaughter, at whose home she passed away, and Mrs. C. F. Allen, of Pottstown, Pa.

Another case of extraordinary longevity is that of Mrs. Mary Potter, of Dwight, near Bloomington, Ill., who recently celebrated her 105th birthday. Mrs. Potter was born in Essex, N. Y., February 23, 1814. In 1855 she settled on a farm with her husband in Dwight, and when he died in 1899 she made her home with her daughter, Margaret, with whom she is now living. Eight children were born to Mrs. Potter and five of these have died.

Mrs. Potter can still read the newspapers and take a keen interest in current topics. During the world-war this remarkable old lady insisted upon doing her bit, made garments for the Belgian and French orphans, and also knitted sweaters. She favors votes for women, and says that the adoption of prohibition is a national blessing.

There are various interesting statements on record of individuals who attained an abnormal length of life. There are the famous cases of Thomas Parr, reputed to have reached 152 years; of Henry Jenkins, whose age is given as 169, and of the Countess of Desmond, accredited with 140 years. However, an investigation of many famous cases of extraordinary longevity have placed great doubt on their truth, the evidence in their favor being the reverse of scientific.

Sir G. C. Lewis in his *Notes and Queries* (1862) expressed his disbelief in any case of a human life exceeding 100 years. He was wrong, of course, yet fundamentally his theory is not to be set aside lightly, owing to the fact that in numerous cases of extraordinary longevity errors have crept in. For instance, the evidence said to exist in registers has often been proved to refer to two persons of the same name. In one sensational case, Carr, of Shoreditch, said to be 207 years of age, it was discovered that a figure 2 had been written over a figure 1. As regards tombstones there is one, at first startling, instance of 309 being carved, which may have been an ignorant stonecutter's way of making 39.

The ancient traditions of partriarchal life extending to many centuries are founded on the very reverse of scientific evidence and instead of life in the past being longer than it is now it has been shown that since the famous Psalmist gave human life its limits of three score years and ten human life has grown longer with civilization. In fact, in civilized countries the average length of life has been on the increase for three centuries. The scientific teachings of right living is on the whole yielding good results.

What is one man's meat may not exactly be another man's poison, yet a dozen or more theories may be given as to how long life may be attained, but all of such theories are constantly being set to naught by real facts. For instance, a great austerity did not kill St. Anthony, who is said to have lived to be 105. Again, the luxuries and dissipations of court-life permitted Titian to paint an excellent picture when he was ninety-six years old. However, right living, while not so noticeable in any individual, has an undoubted influence to increase the length of life in the offsprings.

It is true that a poet wrote a famous hymn, "I Would Not Live Always," yet people are interested in living as long as they can, as that is one of the great laws of nature. Even advanced old age, bringing dim sight, loss of hearing and general decline, is not without its compensations, and Longfellow proved that "age is opportunity no less than youth."

EMPLOYMENT CERTIFICATES VALUABLE SAFEGUARD

The employment certificate as a safeguard for the health and education of working children, as well as a proof of age is discussed in a leaflet just issued by the Children's Bureau, United States Department of Labor, for use in the back-to-school campaign which is being carried on in thirty-eight States by the local child-welfare committees of the Council of National Defense. The need for such safeguards is emphasized by the bureau's experience in administering the former Federal child-labor law, when one-fourth of the 19,546 children under sixteen years of age, to whom certificates of age were issued, were found to be unable to sign their own names legibly.

The bureau points out that the employment certificate safeguards the employer as well as the child, for if the employer has in his possession an employment certificate secured in good faith, stating that the child is of legal age to work, he is protected against prosecution for violating the age provision of the child-labor law.

"An adequate child-labor law," the pamphlet states, "should provide that a child must obtain an employment certificate before he can be legally employed, and that in order to obtain it he must be of a certain age and must have attained a minimum standard of education and physical fitness."

Granted a good law, its proper enforcement depends upon the officer who issues the certificates. Often this work is delegated to an inexperienced clerk or some other person not fitted or trained for the work. Too much importance can not be attached to the personality of the issuing officer.

The issuing officer, in determining whether a child applying for a certificate is of legal age to receive it, finds his surest proof in a birth-record. Because the registration of birth in the United States is far from complete, many children have no birth certificates, and less-reliable records have to be accepted.

"No child should be given a certificate to work until he has completed certain minimum educational requirements," says the pamphlet. In some States a child can not secure a work permit until he is sixteen years old unless he has completed the eighth grade, but in other States thousands of children are permitted by law to leave school for work each year. Such a child's chance of success is slight, because skilled positions require school training. The peace-time army of unemployed is chiefly made up of unskilled workers.

Before granting an employment certificate many States require a child to have a physical examination by a public medical officer who will decide whether or not he is physically able to perform the work he intends to do. Without such a provision, a boy who, unknown to himself, has serious heart-trouble, might accept work as a messenger or a position which required the lifting of heavy weights. In some States a child is re-examined every time he gets a new job, to see what effect his industrial experience has had upon him. Defects acquired are then corrected. A few issuing officers refer children who are physically unfit for work to school nurses or public-health nurses of clinics, so that corrective and preventive steps may be taken.

Many children are neither at school nor at work. To remedy this situation, some States require a child to have the promise of a job before he leaves school. In order to insure the child's return to school between jobs the employer receives the child's employment certificate and is required to return it to the issuing officer if the youngster leaves his work for any reason.

OUR TEN-CENT HAND BOOKS

Useful, Instructive, and Amusing. They Contain Valuable Information on Almost Every Subject

No. 53. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS.—A wonderful little book, telling you how to write to your sweetheart, your father, mother, sister, brother, employer; and, in fact, everybody and anybody you wish to write to.

No. 54. HOW TO KEEP AND MANAGE PETS.—Giving complete information as to the manner and method of raising, keeping, taming, breeding, and managing all kinds of pets; also giving full instructions for making cages, etc. Fully explained by twenty-eight illustrations.

No. 55. HOW TO COLLECT STAMPS AND COINS.—Containing valuable information regarding the collecting and arranging of stamps and coins. Handsomely illustrated.

No. 56. HOW TO BECOME AN ENGINEER.—Containing full instructions how to become a locomotive engineer; also directions for building a model locomotive; together with a full description of everything an engineer should know.

No. 60. HOW TO BECOME A PHOTOGRAPHER.—Containing useful information regarding the Camera and how to work it; also how to make Photographic Magic Lantern Slides and other Transparencies. Handsomely illustrated.

No. 64. HOW TO MAKE ELECTRICAL MACHINES.—Containing full directions for making electrical machines, induction coils, dynamos, and many novel toys to be worked by electricity. By R. A. R. Bennet. Fully illustrated.

No. 65. MULDOON'S JOKES.—The most original book ever published, and it is brimful of wit and humor. It contains a large collection of songs, jokes, conundrums, etc., of Terrence Muldoon, the great wit, humorist, and practical joker of the day.

No. 66. HOW TO DO PUZZLES.—Containing over three hundred interesting puzzles and conundrums, with key to same. A complete book. Fully illustrated.

No. 67. HOW TO DO ELECTRICAL TRICKS.—Containing a large collection of instructive and highly amusing electrical tricks, together with illustrations. By A. Anderson.

No. 68. HOW TO DO CHEMICAL TRICKS.—Containing over one hundred highly amusing and instructive tricks with chemicals. By A. Anderson. Handsomely illustrated.

No. 69. HOW TO DO SLEIGHT-OF-HAND.—Containing over fifty of the latest and best tricks used by magicians. Also containing the secret of second sight. Fully illustrated.

No. 70. HOW TO MAKE MAGIC TOYS.—Containing full directions for making Magic Toys and devices of many kinds. Fully illustrated.

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 10c. per copy, in money or stamps, by

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher,
168 West 23d Street, New York.

Statement of the ownership, management, etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912, of "MYSTERY MAGAZINE," published semi-monthly at New York, N. Y., for April 1, 1919. State of New York, County of New York:—Before me, a Commissioner of Deeds in and for the city and county aforesaid, personally appeared Luis Senarens, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of the "MYSTERY MAGAZINE," and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication, for the date shown in the above captain, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 443 Postal Laws and Regulations, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher—Frank Tousey, Publisher, 168 West 23d St., New York, N. Y.; Editor—Luis Senarens, 168 West 23d St., New York, N. Y.; Managing Editor—None. Business Manager—Luis Senarens, 168 West 23d St., New York, N. Y.

2. That the owners are: Frank Tousey, Publisher, 168 West 23d St., New York, N. Y.; Harry E. Wolff, 168 West 23d St., New York, N. Y.; N. Hastings Wolff, 168 West 23d St., New York, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and condition under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona-fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

LUIS SENARENS, Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 28th day of March, 1919.—Charles Warren Hastings. (My Commission expires February 18, 1921.)

Nervousness and Headaches Caused by Acid-Stomach

There is a much closer connection between the stomach and brain than most people imagine. It is because of this close connection that indigestion, belching, sour, gassy stomach and other stomach miseries—all of which are sure signs of acid stomach—are so often followed by severe attacks of blinding, splitting headaches.

Nervousness, sleeplessness, irritability, mental depression, melancholia and many other disorders which affect the brain can also nearly always be traced to the same source—acid-stomach.

So often you hear people say "I am so nervous I think I'll fly to pieces;" or "It seems I never get a good night's sleep any more, my nerves are all on edge." Little do they dream that acid stomach is the direct cause of their troubles because very often there are no pains in the stomach at all. So you see, you can't always judge an acid-stomach condition by the way your stomach, itself, feels.

If you are weak, nervous, unfit—if you are not up to your old time form—if you lack your accustomed enthusiasm, energy and pep—make this test and see if it isn't acid-stomach that is holding you back—robbing you of your health, strength and vigor. Get a big box of EATONIC—the wonderful modern medicine that so quickly puts an acid stomach to rights. It is in the form of pleasant tasting tablets that you eat like a bit of candy. EATONIC rids the stomach of excess acid. Brings instant relief from indigestion, heartburn, sour belching, food repeating, bloat and gas and makes the stomach cool, pure, sweet and comfortable.

Dentists warn us against the bad effects of acid mouth, pointing out that the acid eats through the enamel of the teeth, causing them to decay. You can easily imagine then the amount of damage excess acid will cause to the delicate organization of the stomach!

Thousands of people are using EATONIC and the results obtained are so remarkable as to be almost unbelievable. Yet their letters of gratitude, many of which are received daily, prove absolutely that EATONIC does all and even more than we claim. The medical profession, too, recognizes the great value of this wonderful remedy. A learned Michigan doctor wrote recently: "I have had such wonderful success with EATONIC that I want every one to know how quickly it will neutralize the acidity of the the stomach (acid-stomach) and the stomach will soon be sweet and normal again, and the sick man well and happy once more."

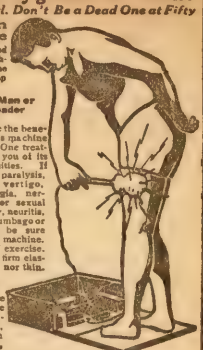
So be sure to get a big box of EATONIC from your druggist today. If it fails in any way to give you the kind of satisfaction you want, take it back—he will refund your money. He doesn't want one penny of your money unless EATONIC helps you.

TAKE EATONIC TODAY

FOR YOUR ACID-STOMACH

NOTE—Over 20,000 drug stores throughout the United States sell and guarantee EATONIC. If you cannot obtain EATONIC quickly at your drug store, do not be without it. Write us and we will mail you a big 50c. box at once and you can send us the 50c. after you get it. Address: EATONIC REMEDY CO., 1073 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

BE WELL AND KEEP WELL
The ROCHE
Electric Hygienic Machine
30 Days' Trial. Don't Be a Dead One at Fifty



Should be in Every Home

It increases blood circulation, strengthens and soothes the nerves. Brings sleep to the sleepless.

The Vigorous Man or Woman is Leader of All

You cannot realize the benefits derived from this machine except you try it. One treatment will convince you of its extraordinary qualities. If you are a sufferer of paralysis, locomotor ataxia, vertigo, headaches, neuralgia, nervousness, general or sexual weakness, apoplexy, neuritis, rheumatism, gout, lumbago or hardening arteries, be sure to investigate this machine. Takes the place of exercise. Give your muscles firm elasticity: be neither fat nor thin.

NORMALIZE YOUR WEIGHT

Do you realize what this machine means to one wanting in vital strength, or suffering from nervous debility, insomnia, prostate gland trouble and varicose veins?

Invented by Prof. J. U. Roche.

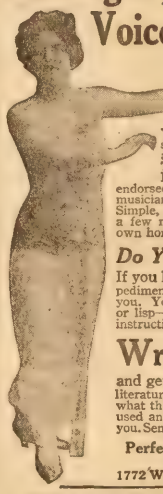
BOOK FREE

Remember this Machine is not a vibrator or a high frequency or a galvanic nuisance; but a genuine health helping, life prolonging apparatus. No wires to connect. All you have to do is to throw on the switch. Be sure to write for FREE BOOK. *It is for men and women* who want to become healthy, vigorous and efficient. This means you! Address: Roche Electric Machine Co., 55, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Aeroplane Ring Free

Large, beautiful, brilliant, flashing stone, Gold filled ring. Warranted 5 years. To be worn on the little finger. To make friends and introduce our Magazine and Ring Bargains, send 15 cts. for a 9 months' subscription, and this Ring, your size, will be sent FREE, postpaid. W. McPhillips, Secy., 615 W. 43d St., Dept. 17-F New York.

Stronger, Clearer Voice for You!



Weakness, huskiness and harshness banished. Your voice given strength, a wider range, an amazing clearness. This done by the Feuchtinger Method, endorsed by leading European musicians, actors and speakers. Simple, silent exercises taken a few minutes daily in your own home.

Do You Stammer?

If you have any voice impediment this method will help you. You need not stammer or lisp—if you will follow our instructions.

Write Today

and get our free book and literature. We will tell you just what this method is, how it is used and what it will do for you. Sent free, postage prepaid.

Perfect Voice Institute
Studio A-1568
1772 Wilson Avenue, Chicago

Oh Boys, Girls! Great Sport with CLAXOPHONE

Voice Thrower

Throw your voice under the table, back of a door, into a trunk, desk in School, any old place. Big FUN fooling Peddlers, Policeman, Friends, anybody. This Claxophone is a small device that lays on your tongue unseen, always ready for use by anyone. Claxophone with full instructions, also Set of Secret Writing Tricks, all sent for 10c one dime. Write at once to

CLAXO TRICK CO.,
Dept. 5 New Haven, Conn.

100 FAT? If you wish to reduce 10 to 60 lbs., be slender; enjoy normal figure, attractive personality, better health; live longer and happier, write for new FREE BOOK on easiest way to get this. Kersin Co., NC-501, Staten I., New York.

To the Wife of One Who Drinks

I have an important confidential message for you. How to conquer the liquor habit in three days and make home happy. It will come in a plain envelope. Wonderful, safe, lasting, reliable, inexpensive method; guaranteed. Write Edw. J. Woods, WM 101, Station F, New York, N. Y. Show this to others.

$1,000 FOR AN IDEA!

Can you write a dramatic synopsis with 37 situations in it? If so you may sell it for the above named sum. Address Scenario Dept. Desk 13.

THE FEATURE PHOTODRAMA CO.,
Suite 702, Baker-Detwiler Bldg., Los Angeles, Cal.

Men Back From War—Men Who Want More Money—Attention!

You can become prosperous and independent selling McConnon Products. Your own business—profitable, pleasant and steadily increasing. Capital and experience not required. No risk—we give full co-operation and instructions. Can refer you to hundreds of successful McConnon Dealers. McConnon & Company well known, financially strong. McConnon Products bought by every farmhouse—Write now for full information while good territory is open.

McConnon & Co. Dept. K Winona, Minn.

Gold Filled BIRTHSTONE RING FREE. This gold filled ring is warranted 5 years. To make friends and introduce our Magazine and Ring Bargains, send 15 cts. for a 6 months' subscription, and this Ring, your size, set with your Birthstone, will be sent FREE, postpaid. M. McPhillips, Secy., 615 W. 43d St., Dept. 7-P New York.

Throw your VOICE into the cellar. Under the bed or anywhere. The **Ventrilo** which fits into the mouth, will enable you to fool all your friends. **10 cts** by mail. Book with instructions. **ARDEE Pub. Co.** Box L Stamford Conn.

Everbright PERISCOPE RING FREE

Every ring warranted five years. To make friends and introduce our Magazine and Ring Bargains, send 15 cts. for a 9 months' subscription, and this Ring, your size, with name engraved, will be sent FREE, postpaid. M. McPhillips, 615 W. 43d St. Dept. 3-P New York.

Folding DOUBLE X-RAY

With this **Double X-RAY** you can apparently see thru cloth or wood—the bones in the body, makes the flesh look transparent. A optical illusion. By mail 10 cts. three for 25 cts. Postpaid **Ardee Co. Box 227 Stamford Conn.**

Pink Cameo Ring FREE

Cameos are set in fine **gold filled ring.** Guaranteed 5 years. To make friends and introduce our Magazine and Ring bargains, send 15 cts for a 9 months' subscription, and this Ring, your size, will be sent FREE, postpaid. M. McPhillips Secy. 615 W. 43d St., Dept. 4-P... New York.

INVISIBLE PHOTOGRAPHS

GENUINE Photo's of **women** in different poses. When received through the mail they seem pieces of Blank Paper but in a few seconds and at no cost to you, they can be turned in to **real Photographs.** Boys! They are **classy** Pictures. We send you **3** for **10 cts** by mail. 19 for 25 cts **No 2 alike. Crown Nov. Co. Dept. S Stamford Conn.**

Wrist Watch Bracelet FREE

Children, rich and poor, go wild with delight over this little bracelet. Patent leather strap. Good buckle. Simulation watch. To make friends and introduce our Magazine, send 15 cts. for a 9 months' subscription, and this Bracelet will be sent FREE, postpaid. M. McPhillips, Secy., 615 W. 43d St., Dept. 16-P New York.

FREE SUBMARINE

BOYS! Here's great sport. Real Wilkins Submarine. Runs on top or under water, straight ahead or in circles. Will dive, rise to the surface and shoot a "Torpedo." Hull finished in battleship grey, operating parts of brass and steel with pure rubber hand motor. Looks like a real submarine and will last for years. Given FREE for selling 20 packages of Bingo Perfumed Ironing Wax at 10c each. Send no money. When present, order now, today.

BINGO CO., DEPT. 120 BINGHAMTON, N. Y.

Baby Ring. FREE 12 kt 1-20 gold filled. To make friends and introduce our Magazine and Ring Bargains, send 15 cts. for a 9 months' subscription, and this Ring, your size, will be sent FREE, postpaid. M. McPhillips, Secy., 615 W. 43d St., Dept. 2-P New York.

BOYS! BOYS! JOIN The JUNIOR YANKS

Be the first to organize a company in your town. A real boys' organization—no grown-up leaders. Secure an officer's commission for yourself. Get four to six boys to join you.

The only boys' organization teaching military signals, wig-wagging, wireless telegraphy, machine gun and rifle drill, how to dig trenches, make tree entanglements, dug-outs, listening posts, how to advance and retreat, do scout and guard duty, all the things a real soldier knows.

Write today and we will tell you how to become a "Junior Yank" and officer, receive the official Junior Yank French cap and collar ornaments, and a complete military outfit without one cent of cost.

Send ten cents (stamps or coin) for the official magazine in colors, "The Junior Yank" and a copy of the manual of drill and rifle practice. Have all your boy friends write at the same time. Address

Junior Yanks, 545 N. LaSalle St., Chicago, Ill.

MUSIC TAUGHT FREE

You can read Music like this quickly

In Your Home. Write today for our booklet. It tells how to learn to play Piano, Organ, Violin, Mandolin, Guitar, Banjo, etc. Beginners or advanced pupils. American School of Music, 13 Lakeside Bldg., Chicago

BOILS or PIMPLES

A Maine Man's Generous Offer

I am happy and if you are troubled with **boils** or **pimples** I want to give you the joy surprise of your life by sending a proof treatment of the wonderfully curative natural healing elixir given me by an Indian in my training camp. It cured me; is working marvels for others. *Why not you?* Enclose four 3-cent stamps to cover my expense of this notice and mailing. **Address: James W. Greely, 305-A, Portland, Maine.**

Big Money, Raise Rabbits for Us

Belgian, New Zealand, Flemish Giants. We sell stock and pay $7.00 pair. Express all rabbits raised from our "Pure Bred Stock"—Our Expense. Contract and literature—10c—None Free.

United Fur and Produce Co., Inc.
Dept. 313, 3017 Wilson Ave., Chicago, Ill.

Raise Hares for Us.

Immense profits easily and quickly made. We furnish stock and pay $2.00 each and expressage when three months old. Contracts, booklets, etc., 10c. Nothing free.

Thorson Rabbit Co., Dept. 21, Aurora, Colo.

FREE AEROPLANE

Boys, we have a real Aeroplane for you. Modeled after famous war monoplanes. Called the Eagle because of its long-soaring flights. The powerful motive power carries it right off the ground. Looks fine sailing in the air. Strongly built, will last long time. Length 28 in. Wing spread 36 in. Free for selling 20 packages of Bingo Perfumed Ironing Wax at 10c each. Order today. Send no money.

Bingo Co. Dept. N Binghamton, N.Y.

BIG BUNCH OF FUN 10c

1 New Airship Game with Airships, 1 Chess & Checker Board and men, 1 Chinese Dip-se-lu-la, 1 set Dominoes, 12 Other Games, 19 Secrets in Magic, 12 Money Making Secrets, Wireless Code, 18 Pictures Movie Actresses, 3 Puzzles & New Ford Joke Book. All for 10c with large Catalogue.

Dept. 118. American Toy Co., Lowell, Mass., U. S. A.

VENTRILOQUISM

Taught Almost Anyone at Home. Small cost. Send today 2-cent stamp for particulars and proof.

O. A. SMITH. BOX M 2-610 901 BISELOW ST., PEORIA, FL.

The Boys' Magazine—FREE

Send for a free sample copy. Splendid stories; beautiful illustrations; handsome covers in colors. The Scott F. Redfield Co., 2747 Main St., Smethport, Pa.

NEW SCIENTIFIC WONDER "X-RAY" Curio

PRICE 12c. SILVER ONLY. **BIG FUN BOYS** You instantly see thru Clothes, Wood Stone, any object. See Bones in Flesh A magic trick novelty FREE with each X Ray.

MARVEL MFG. CO. Dept. 13. NEW HAVEN, CONN.

Reduce Your Bust

or other fat 2 to 4 inches in three weeks with 1 jar of COSI Obesity Cream; external, harmless; no massage. For men and women, sample, 10 cents. Address

CURRIE & CURRIE, 2911 Ave. C., Dept. D. BROOKLYN, N. Y.

GET ON THE VAUDEVILLE STAGE

I tell you how! Fascinating profession. Big salaries. Experience unnecessary. Splendid engagements always waiting. Opportunity for travel. Theatrical agents endorse my methods. Thirty years' experience as both manager and performer. Illustrated book, "All About Vaudeville," FREE. Send 6 cents postage and state age and occupation.

FREDERIC LADELLE, Sta. 224, JACKSON, MICH.

POPULARITY FOLLOWS THE UKULELE

If you play quaint dreamy Hawaiian music or latest songs on the Ukulele you will be wanted everywhere. Within reach by mail 20 simple lessons, give you free a genuine Hawaiian Ukulele, everything complete, extra. Ask us to send the story of Hawaiian music. You will love it. No obligation—absolutely free.

The Hawaiian Institute of Music, 1400 Broadway, Suite 2404, N. Y.

SONG WRITERS

Send your poems today for best offer and immediate publication. Free examination. Music composed. Booklet on request. **Authors & Composers Service Co., Suite 521. 1433 B'way, N. Y.**

ONLY 25c Agents Wanted

Your Own Barber WITH THIS SAFETY HAIR CUTTER

If you can COMB your hair you can cut your own hair with this marvelous invention. Cuts the hair any desired length, short or long. Does the job as nicely as any barber in quarter the time, before your own mirror. You can cut the children's hair at home in a jiffy. Can be used as an ordinary razor to shave the face or finish around temple or neck. Sharpened like any razor. Lasts a lifetime. Saves its cost first time used. **PRICE ONLY 25c, postpaid. Extra Blades 5c each.**

JOHNSON SMITH & CO., Dept. 2203 3224 N. Halsted St., Chicago

LIBERTY BONDS

Instalment Books, War Savings Stamps and Thrift Stamps BOUGHT FOR CASH

KOFFLER

366 BROADWAY, NEW YORK
Room 415. 'Phone Franklin 659.

FREE TO ASTHMA SUFFERERS

A New Home Cure That Anyone Can Use Without Discomfort or Loss of Time.

We have a New Method that cures Asthma, and we want you to try it at our expense. No matter whether your case is of long-standing or recent development, whether it is present as occasional or chronic Asthma, you should send for a free trial of our method. No matter in what climate you live, no matter what your age or occupation, if you are troubled with asthma, our method should relieve you promptly.

We especially want to send it to those apparently hopeless cases, where all forms of inhalers, douches, opium preparations, fumes, "patent smokes," etc., have failed. We want to show everyone at our own expense, that this new method is designed to end all difficult breathing, all wheezing, and all those terrible paroxysms at once and for all time.

This free offer is too important to neglect a single day. Write now, and then begin the method at once. Send no money. Simply mail coupon below. Do It Today.

FREE ASTHMA COUPON

FRONTIER ASTHMA CO., Room 134F Niagara and Hudson Sts., Buffalo, N.Y.

Send free trial of your method to:

.....

.....

.....

LITTLE ADS

Write to Riker & King, Advertising Offices, 118 East 28th Street, New York City, or 8 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago, for particulars about advertising in this magazine.

AIDS TO EFFICIENCY

BE A DETECTIVE. Opportunity for men and women for secret investigation in your district. Write C. T. Ludwig, 221 Westover Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

AGENTS

AMBITIOUS MEN AND WOMEN CAN MAKE $20 to $35 weekly, spare time or whole, representing us; free circulars bring in the orders; big, quick, easy money for you. Send for "Dollars a-Plenty." It's free. Hall Drug Co., Mifflinburg, Pa.

AGENTS: Sell rich looking imported 36x68 rug, $1.85 each. Carter, Tenn., sold 115 in 4 days. Profit $57. You can do same. Write for sample offer selling plan; exclusive territory. Send one by parcel post, prepaid, $1.19. E. Condon, Importer, Dept. 6, 12 Pearl Street, Boston, Mass.

MIRACLE MOTOR-GAS amazes motorists. 3 cts. worth equals gallon gasoline. Eliminates carbon. 300% profit. Isom, Idaho wires, "Ship 500 packages. Made $62 yesterday." Samples FREE. Investigate. Chas. A. Butler, Sec'y, Dept. F, Toledo, Ohio.

$30 MONTHLY AND EVENINGS I make it; so can you; dime brings outfit. Ed. Melville, Chester, Pa.

ART AND DEN PICTURES

CALIFORNIA BATHING GIRLS. Three cabinet photos, 25 cts. Rembrandt Studio, 312 So. Main St., Los Angeles, Cal.

BEAUTIFUL, fascinating den pictures; bathing girls, models, etc. Characteristic poses, size 6x8 inches, 10 for $1.00; 25 for $2.00, postpaid. Our latest novelty "Picture of the Naked Truth" free with every order. Satisfaction guaranteed. M. Mouchak Bros., Dunning, Ill.

DEN PICTURES. Real photos from life. Fascinating Art Models' poses. Sample "Bathing Girl" and catalog, 10 cents. The Simpson Co., Wheeling, W. Va.

BOOKS AND PERIODICALS

A DOLLAR BOOK REDUCED to 25 cts. The Hidden Key that unlocks the future. Old Gypsy Madge's Fortune Teller and the witches' key to lucky dreams. She makes everyone their own Fortune Teller. Send 25 cts. to-day. Popular Book Co., Tilton, N. H.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

SILVER MINES MAKING MILLIONAIRES through small investments. Address: Middlewest Investment Bureau, 650 Boston Block, Minneapolis, Minn.

BOYS. Make extra money. Send me 5 cts. stamps or coin and you will receive a big bunch of mail order magazines, ad sheets, and circulars advertising latest money-making schemes and propositions. E. Fournier, Norris Ave., Pawtucket, R. I.

COINS AND STAMPS

STAMPS: 105 mixed, incl. China, etc., 2 cts.; Album (500 pictures), 3 cts. Bullard, No. 20, Sta. A, Boston.

WE BUY AND SELL OLD COINS. $2 to $500 Each Paid. Keep All Old Money. Send 10 cts. for New Illustrated Coin Value Book. 4x6. You may have valuable coins. Get Posted. Clarke Coin Co., Box 30, Le Roy, N. Y.

COINS and STAMPS—Continued

MEXICAN WAR STAMPS—10 different, free to approval applicants. Geo. G. Linn Co., Columbus, O.

CORRESPONDENCE TUITION

DETECTIVES and INVESTIGATORS make large incomes. Excellent opportunities to travel. Be your own boss. Short hours. We instruct you at a nominal cost. Particulars free. Write American School of Criminology, Dept. M, Detroit, Mich.

FOR THE HEALTH

TO THE WIFE of one who drinks. I have an important confidential message for you. It will come in a plain envelope. How to conquer the liquor habit in 3 days and make home happy. Wonderful, safe, lasting, reliable, inexpensive cure guaranteed. Write to Edw. J. Woods, WA-601, Station F, New York, N. Y. Show this to others.

KOROLAX. Regulates the bowels; overcomes constipation, helps you get rid of superfluous fat. Aids in improving your health, figure and complexion. Box, postpaid, for 9 three-ct. stamps. Korein Co., ND-601, N. Y.

HELP WANTED

LADIES WANTED, and **MEN,** too, to address envelopes and mail advertising matter at home for large mail order firms, spare or whole time. Can make $10 per day. No capital or experience required. Book explains everything; send 10 cts. to cover postage, etc. Ward Pub. Co., Box 77, Tilton, N. H.

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO earn $100.00 a month in your spare time at home? Send 25 cts. (coin) for instructions. Lloyd Stults, Middletown, Md.

U. S. GOVERNMENT wants Railway Mail Clerks. Men—women, 18 to 35. Pleasant, fascinating work. Commence $92 month. Examinations coaching free. Franklin Institute, Dept. E-102, Rochester, N. Y.

MUSICAL

WRITE THE WORDS FOR A SONG. We write music, guarantee publisher's acceptance. Submit poems on patriotism, love or any subject. Chester Music Co., 918 So. Michigan Ave., Suite 249, Chicago, Ill.

SONG WRITERS. Free examination of your poem. Melody composed. Publication. Cornell, C, 23 W. 31st St., New York.

WRITE A SONG—Love, Mother, Home, Childhood, patriotic or any subject. I compose music and guarantee publication. Send words to-day. Thomas Merlin, 293 Reaper Block, Chicago.

WRITE THE WORDS FOR A SONG. We revise poems, write music and guarantee to secure publication. Submit poems on any subject. Broadway Studios, 165C, Fitzgerald Building, New York.

PERSONAL

MARRY RICH, hundreds anxious, description list free, satisfaction guaranteed. Select Club, Dept. A, Emporia, Kansas.

PERSONAL—Continued

MARRY FOR SPEEDY MARRIAGE; absolutely the best, largest in the country; established 14 years, thousands wealthy members, both sexes, wishing early marriage, confidential descriptions free. The Old Reliable Club. Mrs. Wrubel, 732 Madison, Oakland, Cal.

LONELY MAIDEN, 26, would marry. Write for picture. Box 150K, Syracuse, N. Y.

CAL. WIDOW 32, worth $25,000. Maiden 21, worth $60,000, anxious to marry honorable gentlemen. Mrs. Warn, 2221½ Temple, Los Angeles, Cal.

MARRY; MANY RICH. Particulars for stamp. Mrs. Morrison, 3053 W. Lake St., Seattle, Wash.

GET MARRIED. Best matrimonial magazine published. Mailed free. American Distributor, Blairsville, Pa.

SCIENTIFIC

ALL ABOUT YOURSELF. Send your full name, birthdate, dime and stamp for Astral Reading. Mme. E. A. Fisher, B-131, Somerville, Tenn.

ASTROLOGICAL READING given with key to health, 10 cts., birthdate. Worth $1. Joseph Devere, 123 AA Madison St., Chicago.

MYSTIFY YOUR FRIENDS. Learn Secrets of Mind Reading in an hour. Complete and Specific Instructions 25 cts., stamp or coin. Full details for stamp. Globe, Box 7, Sta. "C," Montreal, Canada.

YOUR LIFE STORY in the stars. Send birth date and dime for trial reading. Eddy, 840 East 55th, Chicago, U. S. A., Apartment 73.

WANTED TO BUY

BEAR OIL wanted; genuine only; good price. State quantity you have and where obtained. J. H. Brittain, 150 East 32d St., PD-2, New York.

WE BUY DISCARDED Gold Jewelry, Diamonds, Watches, Platinum and Silver. We will pay up to $35 per set for discarded false teeth (broken or not). Prompt remittances. Packages held 5 to 10 days for sender's approval of our offer. Send NOW. U. S. Smelting Works, 2-D, Chicago, Ill.

MISCELLANEOUS

ALPHABREVO Shorthand Writing. System for taking notes. Complete lesson sheet, 50 cts. Nature Book. Proper reading for those married or engaged. 35 cts. Central Co., 599 Ninth Ave., N. Y.

PRODUCE FRAGRANT ODOR, Japanese incense, 10 cts. box. Blue, white, cotton lunch sets. Wash guaranteed. Retail and wholesale. YaMa, Box 281, Sta. C, Los Angeles, Cal.

DO IT NOW! Send your best photo with 30 cts. and get 25 photo stamp stickers. Photo returned. R. K. Studio, Waverly, Ohio.

ARROW HEADS. 10,000 arrow spear heads and mound relics. Free price list. 100,000 minerals, fossils, shells, closing, 40% dist. delivered. 22 pp. catalog for 5 cts. Dealer 34 yrs. L. W. Stilwell, Deadwood, S. D.

GYPSY FORTUNE TELLER. 5 pretty cards and big catalog, 10 cts. Durst, Dept. 39, 25 Ryberry, N. Y.

TOBACCO or Snuff Habit cured or no pay. $1 if cured. Remedy sent on trial. Superba Co., PC, Baltimore, Md.

CLASSY PICTURES. Bathing girls, art poses, Greek slave, 10 cts., refunded if dissatisfied. Rosleaf Club, Desk 10, St. Louis, Mo.

YOU CAN MAKE GOOD durable paints and varnish, 15 cts. gallon. Emmelmann Bros. Mfg. Co., Dept. J, Indianapolis, Ind.

GENUINE INDIAN BASKETS—Wholesale and retail. Catalogue. Gilham, Highland Springs, Cal.

ITCH-ECZEMA FREE TRIAL

(Also called Tetter, Salt Rheum, Pruritus, Milk-Crust, Weeping Skin, etc.)

ECZEMA CAN BE CURED TO STAY, and when I say cured, I mean just what I say—C-U-R-E-D, and not merely patched up for awhile, to return worse than before. Now, I do not care what all you have used, nor how many doctors have told you that you could not be cured—all I ask is just a chance to show you that I know what I am talking about. If you will write me TO-DAY, I will send you a **FREE TRIAL** of my mild, soothing, guaranteed cure that will convince you more in a day than I or anyone else could in a month's time. If you are disgusted and discouraged, I dare you to give me a chance to prove my claims. By writing me to-day you will enjoy more real comfort than you had ever thought this world holds for you. Just try it, and you will see I am telling you the truth.

DR. J. E. CANNADAY

1611 Park Square — **SEDALIA, MO.**

References: Third National Bank, Sedalia, Mo.

Could you do a better act than to send this notice to some poor sufferer of Eczema?

TOBACCO HABIT CONQUERED IN 3 DAYS

I offer a genuine guaranteed remedy for tobacco or snuff habit. It is mild, pleasant, strengthening. For either sex. Overcome that peculiar **nervousness** and craving for **cigarettes, cigars, pipe, chewing tobacco or snuff.** Tobacco is poisonous and seriously **injures the health** in several ways, causing such disorders as nervous dyspepsia, **sleeplessness,** heart gas, belching, gnawing or other uncomfortable sensation in stomach; **constipation, headache, weak eyes, loss of vigor, red spots on skin, throat irritation, catarrh, asthma, bronchitis, heart failure, lung trouble, melancholy,** neurasthenia, impaired memory and will-power, impure (poisoned) blood, **heartburn,** torpid liver, **loss of appetite,** bad teeth, foul breath, lassitude, **lack of ambition,** weakening and falling out of hair and many other disorders. **Nervous breakdown,** weakened intellect and INSANITY are often attributed to tobacco habit by eminent medical men. Why continue to commit suicide when you can live a really new, contented life if you really get your body and nerves right? **It is unsafe and torturing** to attempt to rid yourself of habit by suddenly stopping with will-power—don't do it. Correct method is to **eliminate the nicotine poison** from system, strengthen the weakened, irritated membranes and nerves and thus genuinely overcome the craving. Would you like to quickly and easily quit tobacco and enjoy yourself a thousand times better while feeling always in robust health? My FREE book tells all about the **wonderful 3 days Method.** Inexpensive, reliable. Also **Secret Method** for conquering habit in another without his knowledge. Full particulars including my **Book on Tobacco & Snuff Habit** mailed in plain wrapper, free. Address:

EDWARD J. WOODS, WF 101, Station F, New York, N. Y.

September Morn Ring—Free

The Beautiful Raised Figure of the Young Girl is a wonderful reproduction, Made of "Everbright Silver," enameled in two colors. Warranted 5 years. To make friends and introduce our Magazine and Ring Bargains, send 10 cts. for a 3 months' subscription, and this Ring, your size, will be sent FREE, postpaid. **M. McPhillips, Secy., 615 W. 43d St., Dept. 20-P New York.**

QUICK HAIR GROWTH!

Box Free To You!

Would You Like Such a Result as This?

Do you want, free, a trial box of **Koskott,** that has proved successful in so many cases? If so, you need only to answer this advt. by postcard or letter, asking for **FREE BOX.** This famous preparation is for dandruff, thinning hair and several forms of **BALDNESS.** In many cases, a new hair growth has been reported when all else had failed. **So why not see for yourself?** Koskott is used by **men and women;** it is perfectly harmless and often starts hair growth in a few days. **Address: Koskott Laboratory, KA 101, Station F, New York, N.Y.** **FREE**

ROYAL RUBY RING FREE

Guaranteed 5 year ring. Gold filled, set with Royal Ruby, Emerald or Amethyst. To make friends and introduce our Magazine and Ring Bargains, send 10 cts. for a 3 months' subscription, and this Ring, your size, will be sent FREE, postpaid. **M. McPhillips, Secy., 615 W. 43d St., Dept. 21-P New York.**

GENUINE—Everbright Silver—Friendship Bracelet—Given

To make friends and introduce our Magazine and Ring Bargains, send 20 cts. for a 3 year's subscription, and this bracelet, to fit your arm, any initial engraved, will be sent FREE, postpaid. **M. McPhillips, Secy., 615 W. 43d St., Dept. 22-F New York.**

BE SURE TO READ

"Moving Picture Stories"

A Weekly Magazine Devoted to Photoplays and Players.

PRICE SIX CENTS PER COPY

The Best Film Magazine on Earth

FOR SALE ON ALL NEWS-STANDS.

Magnificent Colored Cover Portraits of Prominent Screen Performers!

32 PAGES OF READING **OUT EVERY FRIDAY**

Each Number Contains Portraits and Biographies of Actors and Actresses—Five Stories of the Best Films on the Screens—Elegant Half-tone Scenes from the Plays—Interesting Articles About Prominent People in the Films—Doings of Actors and Actresses in the Studios—Lessons in Scenario Writing—Poems, Jokes and every bright Feature of Interest in Making Moving Pictures.

THIS LITTLE MAGAZINE GIVES YOU MORE FOR YOUR MONEY THAN ANY OTHER SIMILAR PUBLICATION ON THE MARKET.

Its authors are the very best that money can procure; its profuse illustrations are exquisite, and its special articles are by the greatest experts in their particular line. No amount of money is spared to make this publication the very best of its kind in the world. Buy a copy NOW from your newsdealer, or send us 6 cents in money or postage-stamps, and we will mail you, postage free, any number you desire.

HARRY E. WOLFF, Publisher, **166 West 23d Street, New York City**